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The Haunted House

AN AMERICAN COMEDY
IN THREE ACTS

BY
OWEN DAVIS

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In the order of their appearance)

MORGAN, *the Tramp*
EMILY, *the Bride*
JACK, *the Groom*
THOMAS, *the Chauffeur*
DUNCAN, *the Author*
HELEN, *the Wife*
ISABEL, *the Girl*
EZRA, *the Constable*
ED, *the Milkman*
GROGAN, *the Detective*
EVANS, *the Father*

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACTS I, II, III: *The country home of Edward Evans,
situated at Cedar Bluff, New York.*

ACT I: *Sunset.*

ACT II: *Midnight.*

ACT III: *Sunrise.*

The following is a copy of the program of the first performance of "THE HAUNTED HOUSE," as produced at the George M. Cohan Theatre, New York, September 2, 1924:

LEWIS AND GORDON

Present

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

A Farce in Three Acts

By OWEN DAVIS

Cast of Characters
(In the order of their appearance)

THE TRAMP	John Irwin
THE BRIDE	Flora Sheffield
THE GROOM	Saxon Kling
THE CHAUFFEUR	Leslie Adams
THE WIFE	Isabel Withers
THE NOVELIST	Wallace Edinger
THE GIRL	Isabel Leighton
THE SHERIFF	Denman Maley
THE MILKMAN	Arthur Aylsworth
THE DETECTIVE	Dudley Clements
THE FATHER	Frank Monroe

Acts I, II and III: *The interior of a Summer cottage at Cedar Point, Conn.*

Staged by Howard Lindsay.



The Stage of the George M. Cohan Theatre, New York. Set for Acts I, II and III of "The Haunted House."

The Haunted House

ACT I

SCENE: *Interior of a summer cottage at Cedar Bluff, N. Y.*

TIME: *Sunset.*

Door at L.C. to outside. Door L. to dining room. Closet door R. of stairs. Closet interior set a little oblique, so audience may easily see into it when door is open. Windows at back R. and back L. of each side of door.

Stairs at L. go up and off L. to second story. Fireplace well down stage at R. The scene stands throughout the play and must be solidly constructed, one section of the ceiling must be braced for practical effects, so that a person may be heard walking overhead. There are shades to the windows and at rise these shades are down, the room is dark, but the late afternoon sun shines outside and the light filters through the drawn shades, giving rather a weird effect to the dimly seen interior.

AT RISE: *The stage is deserted. A sound is heard as of a window being forced. Presently the window back of the shade at C. is raised and MORGAN, the tramp, enters cautiously. A moan is heard offstage and three loud, measured knocks heard from upstairs, then an auto horn heard offstage L.*

MORGAN shuts the window, takes an electric flashlight of strong power from his pocket and

turns it on, flashing it about the room, then combing the room with his light, starts for window to make his escape and hears voices off-stage approaching door. He drops to his knees and looks out from under the slightly raised shade. What he sees there evidently adds to his fear and he draws the shade down as EMILY'S laugh is heard near the door. MORGAN shuts off his light, and as the sound of a key is heard in the lock, he turns and runs into the closet and shuts the door. Up to this time it has not been light enough to distinguish faces. The front door is opened, lights go up one quarter as EMILY DRISCOLL steps in.

EMILY. Here we are, dearest. I know it's going to be perfectly lovely.

(JACK DRISCOLL enters, followed by THOMAS, who is in chauffeur's livery. They carry bags and suitcases. EMILY and JACK are a well-dressed young couple, THOMAS a correct chauffeur and servant.)

JACK. Wait a minute. We'll put these shades up. (JACK raises shade of one window, THOMAS the other (one MORGAN used). Lights go on full, showing cheerful and attractive interior of a summer cottage, gay with cretonned furniture.)

EMILY. Oh, it is lovely. I can't see why father hated it so. (Pleased.)

JACK. (Opens window) It's close in here. It's been shut up for so long.

EMILY. Almost two years——! Isn't father silly?

THOMAS. (Startled—at window c.) Hello! This window wasn't locked. (He raises it.)

JACK. (L.C.) That's queer.

EMILY. (R.C.) Anybody might have climbed right in.

THOMAS. (C.) Yes, Miss—I mean, yes, Mrs. Driscoll.

EMILY. (Gayly) Doesn't it sound funny?

JACK. (Reproachfully) Funny?

EMILY. Oh, you know what I mean. Do hurry and bring the trunk in.

JACK. Come on, Thomas. (JACK and THOMAS cross to the door.)

EMILY. Everything is simply covered with dust, but it won't take long to fix that.

(JACK and THOMAS exit. EMILY finds a cloth on hearth and dusts the mantel, etc., then crosses toward the table, dusting back of chairs and singing happily to herself as JACK and THOMAS enter with a new trunk all tied up with white ribbon.)

JACK. (Disgusted, he points to trunk) Emily, look!

EMILY. We haven't driven a hundred miles with that on the back of our car?

JACK. We have.

EMILY. (Sternly) Surely you could have prevented this, Thomas. (Crosses to above table.)

THOMAS. (Smiles) It is rather the custom at weddings, isn't it, Mrs. Driscoll?

EMILY. (Suddenly afraid) Oh! Look! Look! (She is about to dust the table when she stops and points. On its dust-stained surface is the print of a human hand. JACK crosses to R. of table, THOMAS to above table.)

THOMAS. Hello!

JACK. (With suppressed excitement) The print of a hand. There in the dust.

THOMAS. (*Awed*) There has been somebody in here and not long ago, or that print wouldn't be so clear.

EMILY. (*Afraid*) They might even be here now.

JACK. There isn't so much of value. Just the furniture and possibly some old things of your father's.

THOMAS. Safer to take a good look around, sir.

JACK. Of course. You go upstairs and I'll try these rooms at the back, and the cellar if there is one.

THOMAS. Yes, sir. (*He exits quickly up the stairs.*)

JACK. (*Crosses to door L.I*) You stay here, dear. You're not afraid.

EMILY. I don't think so. I've been so nervous all day. Getting married isn't the most soothing thing in the world, you know. I don't think I am especially afraid of tramps or burglars.

JACK. It's all right, of course, only we mustn't take any chances. (*He exits L.I.*)

(MORGAN, the tramp, who is hidden in the closet, has slowly opened the door on a crack, but hearing voices, he stops. The door opens upstage and he can be seen by the audience as he looks out through the crack. EMILY sings cheerfully and starts to dust the woodwork at R. MORGAN stands tense, his hand on the knob of the door, his face just showing. EMILY draws nearer and MORGAN puts his free hand in the breast of his coat and draws a blunt revolver, standing quietly waiting. EMILY starts to dust the furniture and the woodwork of the door, her song growing louder. For a moment or two they are separated only by the door, then in pressing against it with her dustcloth she shuts the door and it latches. JACK re-enters.)

JACK. Nothing there but a dining-room and kitchen, no cellar, and not a sign of anybody.

THOMAS. (*Enters in stairs, alarmed*) Someone has been in the room just overhead.

JACK. Are you sure?

THOMAS. Yes, sir. It seems to have been sort of a storeroom. The furnished bedroom is at the left of the hall. There are some trunks in the storeroom and a *locked wardrobe*. The locks haven't been fooled with, but there are traces of a man's hand there in the dust—just as there was on that table.

EMILY. But he isn't here now. You are sure.

THOMAS. Not up there. (*Comes downstage.*)

JACK. The real estate people have a key. They have probably been showing the house.

EMILY. (*Relieved*) That's it, of course.

THOMAS. (*At window, upstage*) I don't like that window having been forced.

EMILY. For goodness' sake, don't tell father. He's silly enough about this house now.

THOMAS. (*Crosses down c.*) He says that summer he was here alone that, "queer things happened." I suppose that's all bull, but—

EMILY. Just look around you. Is there anything weird or terrible about this dear little place?

THOMAS. He said it wasn't so bad in the daytime, but at night—

EMILY. Oh! (*She clutches JACK.*)

JACK. Be quiet—now that sort of talk is all—
(*As he speaks there is a sharp rattle on ceiling overhead as if a heavy iron chair had been dropped.*
EMILY screams.)

THOMAS. Good God!

JACK. Come on! (*He rushes upstairs, followed by THOMAS, as EMILY sits in chair L. The door of closet directly behind her slowly opens and the evil face of MORGAN shows. Offstage—upstairs*) Look out, Thomas!

(EMILY screams. EMILY springs to her feet. MORGAN shuts the door as EMILY runs to foot of stairs.)

EMILY. Oh, Jack! Jack!

JACK. Emily! (*He runs down the stairs and catches her in his arms.*) My dear!

EMILY. (*Clings to him*) What is it? What happened?

JACK. It's all right, darling. I was startled, that's all.

EMILY. Startled?

JACK. (*They move to c. upstage*) There was an old coat hanging up there, in a dim corner, and as I looked at it in the half light it seemed to move.

EMILY. Oh!

JACK. But it's all right, I tell you. There's nothing there.

EMILY. Then why didn't Thomas come down?

JACK. I thought he had. That's funny—— (*He calls up stairs*) Thomas! Thomas!

EMILY. (*Afraid*) He—doesn't answer.

JACK. (*Calls*) Thomas! (*He starts for the stairs.*) Thomas!

EMILY. No! Don't go!

JACK. Thomas! (*Slow and heavy footsteps are heard overhead, measured and alarming.*) EMILY clings to JACK.)

EMILY. Listen! Somebody's coming. (*As they cling together, THOMAS slowly comes down the stairs. He is greatly upset.*)

JACK. What is it?

EMILY. What did you see?

THOMAS. Do you—believe—that the dead—stay dead?

EMILY. Oh!

THOMAS. In that old dusty mirror in the room

overhead—I thought I saw a face. There's something in the air up there that frightens me.

JACK. The house has been shut up too long, that's all.

EMILY. It must be all right. There couldn't be anything here.

THOMAS. There's nothing human there, but——

JACK. (*Sharply*) That will do, Thomas. You'd better be starting back. It's three hours' ride.

THOMAS. Yes, sir. I'm sure I beg your pardon, sir. Is there anything I can do?

JACK. No. (THOMAS *starts*.) Wait a minute. Where's my shotgun?

THOMAS. (*Hesitates*) Shotgun! Why, I——

JACK. I put it in the car myself. I'll take a look. (*He exits at back.*)

EMILY. I'm going upstairs. There's nothing in this house to be afraid of. (*She takes up her suitcase and starts up the stairs.*) You tell father we're all right, Thomas, and that he's the silliest old man in the world. (*She exits up the stairs.*)

(*As EMILY goes upstairs, THOMAS, with a quick look around, runs to table and opens drawer and removes a large revolver from the drawer. He drops it into his pocket and then crosses away. JACK enters with a double-barrelled shotgun in his hand and looks coldly at THOMAS, who looks guilty.*)

JACK. What's the idea? I found this gun hidden on the floor in the front of the car with a lot of your spare tubes spread over it.

THOMAS. Was it?

JACK. (*Indignantly*) Was it? What's the game?

THOMAS. (*Guiltily*) It was her father, sir—Mr. Evans.

JACK. Told you to steal my gun?

THOMAS. He is very nervous about firearms and he asked me to——

JACK. (*Crosses to stairs. THOMAS moves R.*) Most nervous man I ever saw in all my life. But I'm not a child, you know. Just tell him his benevolent little scheme didn't work.

(*Enter EMILY. He leans the gun against the rail of the lower step of stairs as EMILY comes down.*)

EMILY. It's simply a darling little house. I'm furious to think that father's silly notions kept us out of it for two whole years.

THOMAS. (*Takes letter from his pocket*) I've a letter here your father asked me to give you. (*Down R.*)

EMILY. A letter? Why, we've just left him. (*Crosses to THOMAS.*)

JACK. Anything important? (*Sits on L. arm of couch.*)

EMILY. (*Sits on couch. THOMAS crosses to up c. at back. EMILY reads letter*) "My dear children: Once more I beg of you not to spend a night in that terrible house. Charge it to an old man's folly if you please, and let Thomas drive you on to the hotel at Ridgefield. Your father, Edward Evans."

JACK. Poor old man.

EMILY. (*Reads*) "P. S.—My last word to you is this: Keep away from the room directly over the living room. Don't, if you love me, trust yourself on those dark and awful stairs."

JACK. (*Rise—crosses L.C.*) He really seems to be in earnest.

THOMAS. (*Gravely*) He is, sir.

EMILY. (*Rises*) But it's so silly. A pretty, modern little camp like this. He was here all alone that summer, and you know how funny he is, and what queer ideas he gets.

JACK. Oh, it's all right, of course. I'm just crazy about it.

EMILY. Run along, Thomas, and tell him I said he was a sweet old mouse.

THOMAS. You know best, I suppose. (*He is up to door*) I—I—I want to say that I wish you every happiness.

EMILY. Why, Thomas! How sweet of you! Goodbye, Thomas.

JACK. Good luck.

THOMAS. Thank you, sir. Goodbye—if I never see you again. (*He exits. JACK laughs uneasily; crosses to EMILY.*)

EMILY. Haunted! (*She looks about the room with a laugh.*) It's so cheerful that it almost sings.

JACK. So am I. (*He kisses her.*) This is something like living.

EMILY. (*Avoids him*) It's just perfect. But we mustn't be silly. We've got to unpack and get dinner.

JACK. Just tell me what to do.

(*There is a knock on door. All these knocks are loud and measured. One—two—three. The satirical spirit of the farce demands a half-comic exaggeration.*)

EMILY. (*Startled*) I wonder——

JACK. I'll see. (*He crosses to door and opens it.*)

(*DESMOND DUNCAN, an impressive man of thirty, a trifle artistic in his dress, stands in the doorway. With him is his wife, HELEN, good-natured, and extremely commonplace woman of about twenty-five.*)

DUNCAN. Pardon me, but we are neighbors. Could we be of any possible assistance to you?

HELEN. (*Smiling cheerfully*) I know how it is, moving in and everything.

EMILY. How awfully kind of you. Please come in. (*They enter.*)

JACK. (R.C. *Rather stiffly*) This is—is Mrs. Driscoll.

DUNCAN. (*Down L., sees trunk with ribbons, kidding them*) How nice!

EMILY. (R. of JACK. *Looks down*) Oh!

HELEN. (*Sees white ribbons*) What? Yes. Look at that trunk.

EMILY. (*Disconsolate*) Oh, dear!

HELEN. And I knew it just by the way he said Mrs. Driscoll. You are just married.

JACK. This is my bride.

DUNCAN. (*Kisses HELEN's hand*) And this is my bride, although our wedding day was almost ten years ago. Mrs. Duncan! I am Desmond Duncan.

JACK. Glad to know you.

EMILY. (*Impressed*) Jack! Desmond Duncan!

JACK. What?

EMILY. The popular author.

HELEN. (*Looks anxiously at DUNCAN*) He always gets cross if you call him that. I'm sure I don't know why. I think it's a great compliment.

DUNCAN. (*Smiling*) Call me what you please, even popular author.

HELEN. I'm sure the money is very nice. Since he wrote "The Haunted House" he's grown all temperament. I've gained pounds. (*Sits on trunk.*)

JACK. (EMILY *sits on couch*) It was a corking story.

DUNCAN. Thank you. I had dreams once of being a poet.

HELEN. That's about all we *did* have.

DUNCAN. I sold myself for a mess of pottage.

HELEN. Come to dinner with us tomorrow night and I'll show you what he calls pottage.

EMILY. Thank you.

DUNCAN. She is very literal. My balance-wheel. (*Puts his hand tenderly on her hair.*) Fate has been very kind to me.

EMILY. I wonder if you will say that after ten years, Jack?

JACK. After a hundred. (*Sits L. of EMILY.*)

DUNCAN. (*Crosses to L. of table*) Yes, at least start happily upon your great adventure. This should be a lovers' paradise. Just the blue of the sky, the moon on the water, the scent of wild flowers, the song of the birds.

HELEN. We have city water and perfect sewerage.

JACK. Anything to shoot?

DUNCAN. We have some unpleasant neighbors. Shoot? Oh, I think so—although I never shoot myself. I am afraid I live only for my writing.

JACK. Fishing, I suppose?

HELEN. The boys catch plenty right off your dock. (*Rise.*)

JACK. (*Rises. EMILY rises*) Our dock?

DUNCAN. Just outside. Haven't you seen it?

JACK. We haven't seen anything.

DUNCAN. Wouldn't you like to see while there is light——

JACK. Why, yes. (*They start up.*)

DUNCAN. (*He and JACK cross to door*) Coming, dear?

HELEN. (*Crosses to down R.*) No, darling.

DUNCAN. It will be worth your while. The sun is setting on the water.

HELEN. (*Sits in rocker, rocking herself*) It usually does. I don't see why I haven't as good a right as the sun has to be comfortable.

DUNCAN. Isn't she quaint? (*He kisses his hand to her and exits.*)

EMILY. (*Sits on R. arm of couch*) I never saw anything so sweet.

HELEN. What?

EMILY. You've been married ten years?

HELEN. Yes.

EMILY. And he is so devoted to you. So tender.

HELEN. Well, you see, my dear, he is writing a love story just now.

EMILY. Well?

HELEN. He's always sentimental when he's writing a love story.

EMILY. But I don't understand.

HELEN. Who does? Of course, when he's writing some kind of stories, it's a little trying. But he's a good husband. Your name's Emily, isn't it?

EMILY. How did you know?

HELEN. I knew your father when he was up here two summers ago. I hope you don't take after him, my dear. Nervous, wasn't he?

EMILY. He still is.

HELEN. He would have it that there were queer goings on here in this house—noises, footsteps, cries, sobbing. It used to give me a cold shiver just to listen to him.

EMILY. He is afraid of it yet. He did his very best to try to stop me from borrowing it for my honeymoon.

HELEN. Men are like that—queer. If it isn't one thing, it's another. A person sort of gets used to it.

(DUNCAN and JACK enter. DUNCAN down c.)

JACK. (*Crosses above table to EMILY. EMILY rises*) A real little dock, and a boat and a boat-house. I'll catch you some fish for your breakfast.

EMILY. We are going to be just perfectly happy.

HELEN. (*Rises*) Isn't there something we can do? It's so hard getting settled.

EMILY. Oh, I'm sure we have everything.

DUNCAN. If not, you've only to let us know. It is only a stone's throw up the path. A call would bring me. (*c. Start up.*)

JACK. That's awfully good of you.

HELEN. (*As they go up, JACK comes to EMILY's R. Puts arm around her*) He means a call would bring me. It would take a policeman to bring him, when he's at his work. You're going to have dinner with us tomorrow night. (*Cross to door.*)

(*Start dimming slowly.*)

EMILY. Thank you so much.

DUNCAN. The obligation is all on my side. After all, you do for me what I have done for so many others. You bring romance to my door—but not as I am doomed to bring it, between the covers of a book.

JACK. You've been very kind. We know the value of your time.

DUNCAN. Not at all, my boy. My novel is finished.

HELEN. (*Alarmed*) You're going to rewrite it, aren't you?

DUNCAN. No, absolutely finished. Until a new idea strikes me, I'm a free man.

HELEN. Oh, dear! It may be *anything*. (*She turns to JACK*) I'll warn your wife if it's one of those eternal triangles. I hate the crime stories the worst. The last one he was arrested twice. (*She exits.*)

DUNCAN. (*Amused*) Ha, ha! A fancy of my wife's, that my mood is shaped by the moment's work I have in hand. A harmless delusion—let her keep it. My dear boy, without women what should we be? (*Recites*)

"Oh, woman, in our hour of ease—

Uncertain, coy and hard to please. Our hour
of ease?"

(Looks at JACK and EMILY, who stand, arm around each other) Story of a newly married couple—just a fleeting idea. I may never use it. (He exits.)

EMILY. He wouldn't put us in his novel, would he?

JACK. (Crosses up. Closes windows) We'll keep out of his way.

EMILY. (Crosses to trunk) Now I'll unlock the trunk and we'll carry these trays upstairs.

JACK. It's too heavy for you. (He lifts top tray out. She kisses him.)

EMILY. (She lifts the second tray out) I like his wife. I wish I was like that, a practical woman.

JACK. They're usually so damned fat. (Place top tray on chair by stairs.)

EMILY. (Runs up and looks out window) There's a runabout out there. Oh! There's a girl coming here.

JACK. (Crosses c.) We might as well have stayed on Park Avenue.

EMILY. (Crosses to him) See what she wants and get rid of her. I'll just put these things away.

JACK. There's only one woman in the world for me. (Kisses her. EMILY exits up stairs with tray.

JACK opens door. ISABEL WESTLEY enters. Lights dimmed.) You! Isabel!

ISABEL. (Entering) You wouldn't come to me—so I came to you.

JACK. (Comes down) I told you that all was over between us.

ISABEL. (Follows) And that isn't the first lie you've told me.

JACK. (Firmly) I want you to go—now!

ISABEL. Oh, no. I have something to say to this

silly little fool of yours. (*Door of closet opens and MORGAN looks out.*)

JACK. Listen to me. I am desperate. I warn you that if you come between me and the girl I've married——

ISABEL. (*Defiantly*) You'll what?

JACK. I'll kill you. (*MORGAN shuts closet door. Slam.*) What's that?

ISABEL. What?

JACK. Something startled me.

ISABEL. You have a guilty conscience.

EMILY. (*Offstage. Upstairs*) Do you want me, darling?

JACK. Hush!

ISABEL. (*In fierce whisper*) Tell her you do! Let's have this thing settled once and for all.

EMILY. (*Offstage*) Do you want me?

JACK. (*Crosses to stairs, calls*) No, dearest! No! I don't want you. I—no—— (*He turns to ISABEL*) I give up. I'll do anything—anything you say, if you'll go away without seeing her.

ISABEL. I'll wait for you outside in the little thicket right back of where my car is standing.

JACK. What will she think if I leave her at a time like this?

ISABEL. It isn't what she'll think if you leave her—it's what she'll *know* if you don't.

JACK. I'll come.

(*EMILY enters.*)

EMILY. Good evening. I hope my husband has done what he could for you. (*Pushes button. Lights up full.*)

ISABEL. Oh, yes—always.

EMILY. Oh! You've met before.

JACK. No! No! Not before. Of course not—

naturally—I mean never—never—she—this lady has been having trouble——

ISABEL. (*Sadly*) Yes, great trouble.

JACK. With her automobile.

ISABEL. Yes.

EMILY. Oh!

JACK. Engine trouble, but it's all right now, at least I think it is. I'll just step out there with her. (*He starts.*)

EMILY. (*She starts*) Of course *we* will. Come.

JACK. Yes, we'll go. (*Crosses down R.* EMILY *crosses to C.* JACK *stops*) If she needs us, very likely she won't, she'll go—and if she calls us, we'll come.

ISABEL. (*To JACK*) I hope it won't be necessary to call you.

JACK. Yes—no. It's getting dark. I really think you ought to see if your car will start now.

EMILY. Come, let's all go together.

ISABEL. No—you—you stay here with—him. (*She bursts into tears.*)

EMILY. Oh, what is it?

ISABEL. I'm sorry. I meant to be brave. It was seeing you together—forgive me. (*She sobs.*)

EMILY. Seeing *us* together?

JACK. It would be kinder not to talk about her, dear. She's had a great loss. She just happened to mention it to me.

EMILY. (*All sympathy*) Oh—your husband?

ISABEL. (*Sobs*) Don't.

JACK. No—not her husband, it was——

ISABEL. Please! Oh, how can I bear it? Haven't you any heart at all? (*She turns and exits.* EMILY *follows to door.* JACK *follows* EMILY. EMILY *shuts door and faces him sternly.*)

EMILY. I want you to tell me what she meant.

JACK. Why——

EMILY. She knew you, I'm sure of it.

JACK. (*Comes down R.C.*) No—no. She's a sad woman, that's all; desperate; it's awful—death, you know; shocking—children—poor babies—all dead—terrible.

EMILY. Four babies?

JACK. Drowned.

EMILY. Well—I didn't like the way she looked at you.

JACK. Neither did I. But think of the trouble she's had. She's hardly responsible.

EMILY. Are you telling me the truth, Jack?

JACK. Emily.

EMILY. I've seen that woman before, or her photograph. Jack, you wouldn't deceive me?

JACK. (*Shocked*) On our wedding day!

EMILY. No—of course, you wouldn't.

JACK. Darling! (*He starts to embrace her.*)

EMILY. (*Crosses to behind couch*) No! Don't kiss me. I'm not going to be silly, but you must give me a few minutes to put this thing out of my mind. (*MORGAN opens door of closet.*)

JACK. Look at that door! It's opened itself and now it's closing.

EMILY. (*Clings to him in terror*) There's someone in that closet.

JACK. I'll see. (*Starts to c.* EMILY rear. *Gets gun, brings it to him.*)

EMILY. Here's your gun. (*She picks up shotgun from where it rests by door.*)

JACK. Put it down. I don't need any gun. (*EMILY puts shotgun at end of table. JACK steps toward closet.*)

EMILY. Jack!

JACK. Don't worry about me. I can take care of myself. (*He steps toward closet, raising his voice*) Come out of that. (*Lights flicker and go out. Chain effect. There are sounds of footsteps and in the complete darkness EMILY screams. MORGAN gets*

into trunk. JACK puts shotgun off stage in darkness.) What is it?

EMILY. Where are you, Jack?

JACK. (*In the dark*) I'm by the door. Can you find the foot of the staircase?

EMILY. Wait! (*Pause.*) Yes! I have found it.

JACK. I have both doors covered. He can't get out. (*He strikes a match.*) Ah! (*Finds the button and presses it. Lights go up. EMILY is at foot of stairs—closet door is open and the trunk is now closed. MORGAN is gone.*)

EMILY. (*Looking around wildly*) He isn't there.

JACK. He must be there. Give me my gun.

EMILY. (*Crosses to table*) It's right here. (*She turns to table.*) Jack! It's gone.

JACK. Gone! (*Throws closet door open—EMILY crosses to c.*)

EMILY. Jack. It's just the way father said. "Things happen here." I am afraid.

JACK. (*Crosses to her*) Don't be silly, dear. He must have passed us before I found the door.

EMILY. But the gun! I don't understand. And it hasn't seemed the same since it's grown dark. Father said it wouldn't. (*EMILY clings to JACK. Three loud knocks on door.*)

JACK. Now, darling, you mustn't be nervous.

(EZRA NESTLE, a grim little man of abrupt and aggressive manner, steps in with a revolver pointed at them.)

EZRA. Put your hands up!

EMILY. Jack!

EZRA. Put 'em up. Now, what are you folks doing here? Oh! You brought a trunk—or maybe you was stealin' it. Who are you? Where'd you come from?

JACK. Is that any business of yours?

EMILY. This is my father's house.

EZRA. What's his name?

EMILY. Edward Evans.

EZRA. That's right. Guess I made a mistake. *(He puts pistol into his pocket.)* If you was coming to live here—you ought to have told me.

EMILY. Are you on the police force?

EZRA. I *am* the police force.

EMILY. *(Points)* There was a man hidden in that closet. Ever since we came. He just got away.

EZRA. So? *(He crosses to closet and sniffs the air, then down L.C.)* Smells strong enough of ter-backer to knock you down. Where'd he go?

JACK. Just as we saw him, the lights went out. I don't know why, but they did. I could almost swear he didn't go through either of these doors.

EMILY. But when the lights went on, he was gone.

EZRA. Looked upstairs?

JACK. Not since then.

(READY Footsteps and Chain Noise Overhead.)

EZRA. Might be up there. I didn't see nobody outside and I was looking to see who owned that car out there. Yours, ain't it?

JACK. No.

EZRA. This town's gettin' kind o' popular tonight. *(He starts up the stairs.)*

JACK. *(Crosses to EZRA)* Wait a minute—I'll go with you.

EZRA. No—I been the only policemen here for ten years and up to now I ain't been very busy. *(He exits.)*

EMILY. *(C.)* I don't like it here, Jack. I want you to take me away.

JACK. *(Crosses to her)* I give you my word I will if one more thing happens to frighten you.

(Loud knock on door—imperatively. EMILY is afraid. JACK runs up, opens door.)

EMILY. Oh! (Moves to R.)

(DUNCAN stands in doorway, his manner completely changed, his kindly and rather romantic pose has vanished and he is now alert and suspicious. He comes to C. JACK down L.C.)

DUNCAN. Ah! I have been watching that automobile out there from the veranda. It is dark; one can hardly see it.

JACK. Well?

DUNCAN. It started a train of thought; an automobile—a lonely road, no owner in sight, and night has fallen.

(Running footsteps heard on roof—chains dragging —EZRA enters, running down the stairs.)

JACK. (To EZRA) Well?

EZRA. Nobody up there.

EMILY. (To DUNCAN) We think there's been a tramp in the house.

DUNCAN. (Coldly) No tramp owned that automobile.

EZRA. Funny, leaving a car around like that; maybe there's something the matter with it.

EMILY. The engine won't run.

DUNCAN. (Sharply) You've examined that car?

EMILY. No, of course not, but——

DUNCAN. (To EZRA) She knows who was in it.

EZRA. How do you know she does?

DUNCAN. I can't tell you how I know all I know.

EZRA. I s'pose you ain't got time.

DUNCAN. I have time enough to at least make a

thorough examination of this affair. Truth, you know, is often stranger than fiction. (*Exits.*)

EZRA. (*Looks after him*) Ever live with a literary person?

(*READY Lights Out and On.*)

EMILY. No.

EZRA. I had a brother that was a writer; he taught penmanship in the public school, but he turned out all right. He's running the garage.

EMILY. Suppose we should need you in the night?

EZRA. (*Goes up to door*) Telephone. Number eleven, ring three, party R. If I ain't there, tell my wife.

EMILY. But we haven't a telephone.

EZRA. Well, that makes it harder. (*He exits.*)

EMILY. He is too absurd; everything that happens here and everybody. I'm not going to be afraid any more.

JACK. That's the girl.

EMILY. (*Crosses to trunk*) Let's carry this tray upstairs, then I'll get you some dinner, you poor boy.

JACK. Good. (*He picks up the large tray at stairs.*)

EMILY. First I'll lock the trunk. (*She locks it.*) My new summer furs are in there. (*She turns away and picks up the lighter trunk tray.*) We'll have to hurry, Jack; we've such a lot to do. (*Three loud knocks sound from inside trunk. EMILY stops dismayed.*) Oh!

(*MORGAN.*)

JACK. (*To back of trunk. Worried*) Was that the door? (*Trunk moves. Three slower but very distinct knocks, obviously from inside the trunk.*) There's someone in the trunk.

(*READY Shot.*)

EMILY. Well, I locked it anyway. Let's just send for an expressman.

JACK. (*Puts tray down back of trunk*) I am going to see who it is. Give me your keys.

EMILY. You'll be careful? (*Crosses to fireplace for axe. Trunk moves. She hands him the keys.*)

JACK. I'm going to get this man. (*Puts key in lock. EMILY gets an axe that stands at fireplace and crosses firmly to trunk.*) What are you going to do?

EMILY. He may spring out or something. (*She raises the axe.*) Are you ready?

JACK. Yes. (*Lights flicker and go out. EMILY screams. There are sounds of rushing feet in the dark and a struggle—chairs are overturned; the two men grunt and pant, and there is the sharp sound of a blow on flesh. EMILY screams, sobs in fear.*) Where is he? Oh! (*MORGAN and JACK exit.*)

EMILY. Jack! Jack! Where's the switch? Jack! Answer me. (*The lights flash on, showing EMILY with her finger on the switch. JACK has vanished. The front door is open and the closet door is closed. EMILY looks about in terror.*) Jack! Oh, oh, oh! (*She staggers into chair, L.C.*)

(*ED WHITE, the rural milkman, suddenly appears at window back.*)

ED. (*Very loud*) Milk!! (*Terrified by this sudden and rather loud demand, EMILY screams and rushes out through the door at the back, turning to the R. ED leaves the window and comes to door and looks in. He has a tin basket of milk bottles in his hand. He scratches his head as if puzzled, then crosses and puts a bottle of milk on table R.C. At this moment there is a report of a shotgun from just back of scene and a loud scream of agony in ISABEL'S voice. Shot. ED turns—EMILY screams outside. ED runs out afraid.*)

(*The door of the closet opens and MORGAN comes*

out. Sees the trunk and crosses to it and fills his arms with EMILY'S dresses and furs. Leaves one dress half out of trunk. He then stops at table and picks up the milk bottle and runs out at back. In a moment EMILY, almost dead from fright, totters in the door; she clings to door for support, then with a sob she stumbles forward and sits in a chair down L., her teeth chattering. JACK runs in to C.)

JACK. Emily!

EMILY. (*Rises—crosses to him. Screams*) Oh!

JACK. Oh, my darling.

ED. (*Enters. Very loud*) Milk!

EMILY. Oh! (*They turn, she clings to JACK and points.*) That's him.

JACK. (*Points*) What were you doing in that closet?

ED. (*In doorway; stays there*) Are you nutty or something?

EMILY. He come to the window just now and screamed some terrible thing at me.

ED. All's I said was *milk*.

JACK. Milk!

ED. Yes, milk. Lady next door said you'd be wantin' it. I'm the milkman.

JACK. (*To EMILY*) You see, dear. He's the milkman.

EMILY. But that shot?

ED. Some boy, I guess, shooting at owls. Well, so long—I've got to be going—I left the milk.

EMILY. Left it—where?

ED. On the table.

EMILY. Oh! (*They turn to table.*)

JACK. (*Looking for it*) Milk?

ED. I put it there.

EMILY. Now the milk's gone.

JACK. It couldn't have gone.

(EMILY sees a dress half out of trunk and runs to it.)

EMILY. Oh! My new summer furs. And my sport clothes. They're gone! Oh!

(HELEN enters through the open door, carrying a heavy tray covered with a napkin. There is a small bottle of milk on the tray.)

HELEN. (Crosses to c.) Excuse me for interrupting anybody as happy as you two.

EMILY. Happy!

HELEN. (Puts tray on table. Crosses to c.) I've brought you over a little lunch, just to save you bother, you know. (Takes napkin off; ED stares at bottle of milk on tray—picks it up and puts it back.)

EMILY. You're very kind.

HELEN. Oh, it's nothing. My husband is out somewhere and we haven't had dinner.

(DUNCAN bursts violently in the door. He is carrying a large auto cushion which he drops on stage c.)

DUNCAN. Wait—wait! Don't be frightened!

EMILY. What!

DUNCAN. I am sorry to have to bring you ladies into this, but it can't be helped.

JACK. What is it?

DUNCAN. I have found the body.

HELEN. (Who has been looking at him fearfully) My God! He's going to write another mystery story.

JACK. The body!

DUNCAN. It's murder.

EMILY. Oh!

DUNCAN. (Crosses to R.C. HELEN crosses to

EMILY. *To ED*) I want you! In the name of the law!

ED. *(Back of table)* Good Lord! I ain't murdered nobody, honest and true.

DUNCAN. *(To ED)* I want your assistance to bring the victim in—*(To JACK)*—and yours.

JACK. Of course.

DUNCAN. *(Crosses up to door. At door, to EMILY and HELEN)* Until we return, let no one leave this house. *(DUNCAN exits with JACK and ED.)*

EMILY. *(Crosses c.)* He speaks as though he thought one of us was guilty. *(Picks up auto cushion and places it on chair by window. Remains up.)*

HELEN. *(Crosses extreme R. Anxiously)* If he's started another mystery story, we're all lucky if we keep out of jail.

(DUNCAN enters.)

DUNCAN. I would have been glad to have spared you this.

HELEN. *(Anxiously)* I wish you'd wear your hat in the night air.

DUNCAN. *(Crosses c.)* My dear, you are a good woman, a true wife, but at present you annoy me. My assistants are bringing him in; you must be firm. At a time like this we must all show the best side of our natures. *(He calls outside)* Come, please. *(JACK and ED enter with body of EZRA.)* Put it here. *(He removes articles from table and EZRA is stretched out on it.)*

EMILY. *(Down c.)* Oh, the poor fellow.

JACK. *(Above table R.)* We must get a doctor.

DUNCAN. *(Above table)* Why? I am here.

JACK. Are you a physician?

DUNCAN. I have written of them.

HELEN. Oh, I guess Duncan will do well enough if the poor fellow is dead. *(Extreme R.)*

DUNCAN. Quite dead. (*Ed crosses up c.*) Now I shall make sure of the exact nature of the wound.

EZRA. Hello. What's going on here? (*Sits up with a start. All frightened.*)

DUNCAN. I thought you were murdered.

EZRA. (*Indignant*) I ain't nothin' of the kind. I fainted.

DUNCAN. Did what?

EZRA. (*Rises off table. Crosses c.*) I was lookin' for the murderer out there and I seen some blood, so I fainted, like I always do. I'm sensitive—I always get sensitive when anything upsets me. I got a good mind to arrest you all for interferin' with an officer.

JACK. You're a fine officer. Don't you know we ought to be doing something?

EZRA. Oh, I been busy all right. Soon as I heard of the murder I telephoned over to the summer hotel. There's a famous New York detective stopping there; he'll be over on train number seven.

DUNCAN. (*Crosses c. front of sofa. EZRA L.C.*) Then I must be quick.

EZRA. What are you going to do?

DUNCAN. For once the obvious thing. I propose to discover the murderer of the young woman.

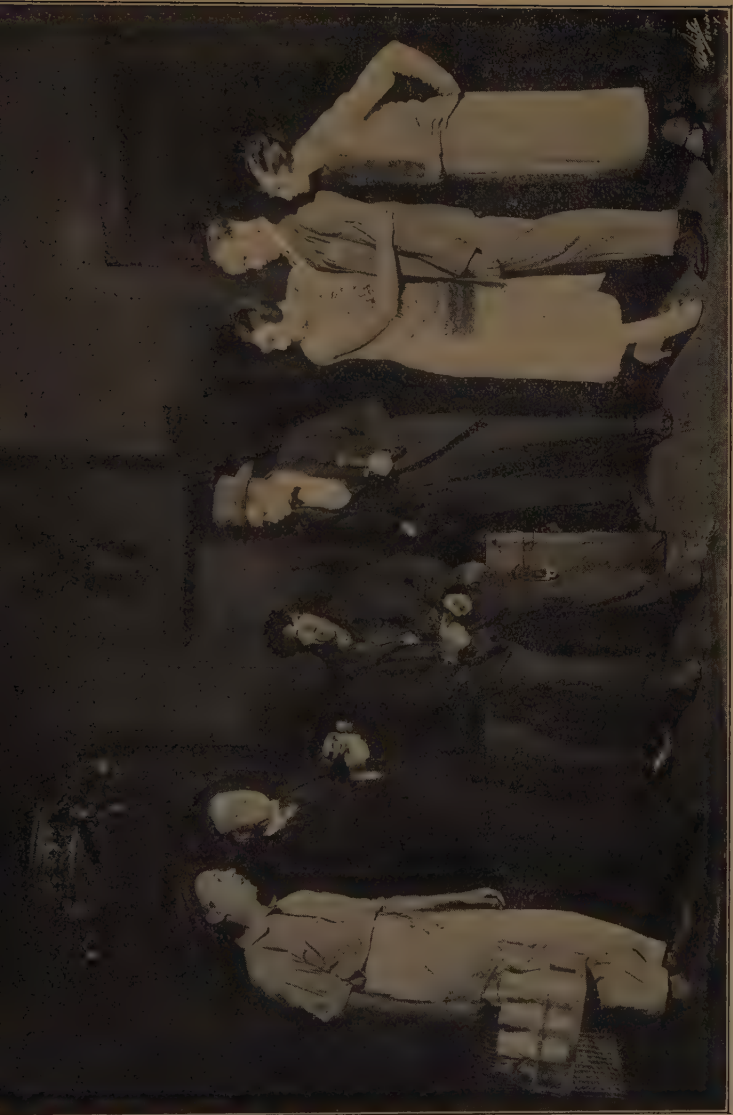
EMILY. A woman! (*JACK comes front of sofa.*)

DUNCAN. Yes. How absurd of me to be mistaken about this stupid constable. Listen. I was on the road perhaps fifty yards from here, I heard a shot and a woman's scream. Look! (*He holds up a card case and takes out a card.*) I found this on the road. Her name is——

JACK. (*Sits on couch. Startled*) Isabel Westley.

DUNCAN. Ah! You knew her. It is my duty to tell you that anything you may say will be used against you. After I found this card, I lit a match and saw a pool of blood.

EZRA. O-o-o-oh! (*Sits on trunk.*)



DUNCAN. She can't have gone far. I want you to help me find her.

EZRA. I'll go, but I don't think I'll be much use.
(*Exit with ED.*)

EMILY. Bring her here, Jack; we must do what we can.

JACK. Yes, dear. (*Exit.*)

DUNCAN. I must ask you to be calm—trust me to see that justice is done. You have no cause for alarm. If you are attacked during my absence, I pledge you my honor that your deaths shall be severely punished. (*Exits.*)

EMILY. (*Crosses R.*) If I had only taken father's advice. If I had never come to this awful, awful place. My wedding day. (*Sits on couch.*)

HELEN. There, there, my dear. Think how worse off that poor young woman out there is. (*Down R.*)

JACK. (*Enters*) We can't do a thing until they get lanterns; they've sent a boy. (*Sits in chair L.*)

HELEN. We have a lantern.

JACK. Your husband has it; he is examining the footprints in the road, and the blood. It's awful. (*EMILY crosses to JACK.*) The side of the car, and the road—we found where she dragged herself into the bushes, but it's thick undergrowth. Poor girl! Poor girl!

EMILY. Don't, dear. I always knew that at one time you had been in love with her—I'd never met her. I wanted never to think about her. (*She puts her hand on his arm.*)

JACK. It was buckshot. The wind shield was broken. She must have been on the step, just getting into the car. It was awful.

EMILY. Try not to think too much about it. We will do all we can. Do they think it was that man that was hidden in there?

JACK. Yes. They must think that. They're trying to find him.

(DUNCAN enters with lantern which he places on table. Crosses c.)

DUNCAN. The neighbors are searching the woods and hunting for suspicious characters. Mr. Nestle has sent for a detective, but I'm delighted to learn that he is some distance away. Fortunately it will be some time before he can arrive.

EMILY. Fortunately?

DUNCAN. Is that selfish of me? I'm sorry, but for years I have hungered for just such a moment as this. I propose to take full advantage of it.

JACK. What do you mean?

DUNCAN. I mean that it is my intention to solve this mystery before the usual professional bungler arrives.

HELEN. Your dinner will get cold, Duncan.

DUNCAN. The solution of a mystery is a perfectly simple scientific problem. We will say that X equals the unknown assassin. Y and Z equal the data upon which we build our structures. The solution depends upon a scientific formula—the art of psycho-analysis. Fortunately I have made a study of this method. Ah! *(He stoops and examines a spot on floor.)*

EMILY. What is it?

JACK. *(Looking at spot)* Nail in the board. *(Crosses to trunk.)*

HELEN. You hate cold lamb; you know you do.

DUNCAN. *(At trunk)* Ah! *(He looks at EMILY.)* Do you smoke a pipe?

EMILY. *(Indignant)* Certainly not. *(DUNCAN sniffs over the trunk.)* That tramp was in there.

DUNCAN. Yes? I see. Now we have to start with——

(ED WHITE enters with JACK's shotgun in his hand.)

ED. Mr. Duncan, I found this out in front—right under a bush.

DUNCAN. *(Takes the gun)* A shotgun!

JACK. It's my gun.

DUNCAN. *(With fierce suspicion)* Ah!

JACK. *(Angry)* What do you say "ah" like that for? It isn't even loaded.

DUNCAN. Not fired recently, I suppose?

JACK. Not for six months.

DUNCAN. Oh! *(He takes a handkerchief from his pocket and pushes a part of it into the barrel of the gun and draws it out; it is black. He holds it up meaningly.)*

JACK. *(Rises)* What!!

DUNCAN. Not loaded, you said. I suppose that tramp, if there *was* a tramp, happened to be carrying cartridges in his pocket to fit your gun?

JACK. *(Crosses to L. of EMILY)* I tell you——

DUNCAN. Wait! Please! *(Crosses to above table. ED crosses to up R. of DUNCAN. DUNCAN breaks the gun and takes out two cartridges.)* One loaded! One empty. Wait. *(He takes out a pocket knife and cuts open the loaded cartridge and shakes the shot out on the table.)* Now! *(Leaves gun on table. He walks up to auto cushion, c., and takes shot out of it.)* A single buckshot embedded in the cushion of the car. *(He compares it with one of the others and all bend over, looking on.)* They are identical. The murder was committed with this gun—your gun.

EMILY. Jack!

DUNCAN. *(Crosses to c. In formal tone)* When was this weapon last in your possession?

JACK. About half an hour ago. It was there by that table. Suddenly the lights went out—when they came on again—it had vanished.

EMILY. The tramp was here. We believe he took it.

DUNCAN. The tramp! Why persist in repeating that shallow absurdity? You know this woman, Isabel Westley?

JACK. (*Crosses L.*) I—I—yes—I knew her.

DUNCAN. When did you see her last?

JACK. (*Hesitates*) She was here in this room, some time before the shot was fired. I saw her then.

DUNCAN. (*Severely*) My question was, when did you see her last?

EMILY. He didn't see her after that.

DUNCAN. (*To JACK*) You did not follow her to the car and stand for some moments talking to her there, with your right foot on the running board and your left foot a little off the roadway on the left hand side of the car?

JACK. (*Hesitates*) I——

DUNCAN. It is useless to deny it. See! Look at his left hand trouser leg. (*All look. ED moves to C.*) There! (*DUNCAN stoops and takes a couple of burdock burrs from JACK's trouser leg. He passes burrs to ED.*)

ED. Burdock burrs. (*Puts burrs on table. HELEN moves to R. of DUNCAN.*)

DUNCAN. And there, by the car, is the only patch of burdock burrs anywhere about this house. You don't deny that you were there?

JACK. I was there, but——

EMILY. (*Coldly, suspicious*) When?

JACK. When I went out looking for that tramp. I saw something moving in the road. I ran forward——

DUNCAN. It was Isabel Westley.

JACK. (*Reluctantly. Sits on trunk*) Yes.

DUNCAN. Go on.

JACK. When she saw who I was she turned away.

DUNCAN. And you?

JACK. (*Reluctantly*) I spoke to her.

EMILY. (*Distressed*) Oh, you did go to see her. After all you said to me.

JACK. I just wanted to get rid of her.

DUNCAN. Why should you want to get rid of this woman?

ED. Don't be silly—it's natural to want to get rid of any woman.

JACK. I just offered to help her start her car, that's all.

DUNCAN. That is *not* all. It wouldn't have been necessary for you to have walked completely around to the other side of the car for you to say that. She walked around the car to avoid you. *You* followed her.

JACK. Yes.

EMILY. (*Crosses to him*) You followed this woman. A girl you were once engaged to be married to? (*Crosses L.*) Oh!

HELEN. There, my dear, there. (*Crosses down to EMILY.*)

JACK. You don't understand. You don't understand.

DUNCAN. You were engaged to be married to this lady?

JACK. Yes.

DUNCAN. There had been a quarrel?

JACK. The engagement was broken.

EMILY. By you, or by her?

JACK. I won't answer that.

DUNCAN. Will you say what passed between you before you fired?

JACK. (*Rises*) Fired! I didn't! You can't bully me, Mr. Duncan, and you can't frighten me. I spoke a few words to her; she wouldn't answer me; she just laughed and flicked her cigarette between her thumb and finger at me, and walked away. I didn't follow her after that. I turned and started up toward the house—a shot was fired somewhere in

front of me, fired at me, I thought, and I heard two screams, then I ran in here.

DUNCAN. (*Eagerly*) The shot came from in front of you?

JACK. From between where I was and this house. I saw the flash.

DUNCAN. White! (*To ED*) Some of his statements do not fit in with my theory of this crime; the truth of them is easily established. Wait here. (*He picks up lantern. To JACK*) You wait here, too. (*Exits.*)

ED. That feller's too smart to be a writer; he ought to be a Notary Public. (*JACK crosses to EMILY, but R. of HELEN; she turns away.*)

JACK. Emily, dear.

HELEN. Now, please don't quarrel, you two. You're both to blame, so it's easy enough for you to forgive each other and start out fresh.

EMILY. (*To HELEN*) He had no right to speak to that woman. He may not have been to blame for her coming here, but he had no right to follow her.

JACK. You had no right to distrust me.

HELEN. Fifty-fifty. Kiss and make up.

JACK. (*To HELEN*) Do you think I'd care if I never spoke to any woman in the world but Emily?

EMILY. (*To HELEN*) Of course I really didn't distrust him, only it was a shock to—to——

JACK. (*To EMILY*) Oh! Oh! Darling!

EMILY. Jack! Oh, Jack! (*She rushes into his arms. HELEN beams on them. ED WHITE blows his nose.*)

ED. (*At table*) Affectin', ain't it? Seems sort of a pity to have to separate them.

EMILY. (*Turns*) Separate us?

ED. I mean when they take him to prison.

(*Enter DUNCAN.*)

DUNCAN. He is not going to prison. In our search for the murderer of Isabel Westley we can leave him out.

ED. (*Crosses to him*) How do you know he didn't do it?

DUNCAN. (*Holds up a partly consumed cigarette*) Because here is the cigarette she flicked at him between her thumb and her finger. You can see the mark of her thumb nail, there where it's damp from the moisture of her lips.

ED. (*Takes cigarette from DUNCAN. Looks at it*) It's a Camel. (*Throws cigarette on table.*)

DUNCAN. Isabel Westley was shot by a woman.

HELEN. (*Shocked*) Woman!

EMILY. You think so?

DUNCAN. I know it. I have just discovered in the dust, at the side of the car, several clear impressions of a woman's foot—one of these footprints has pressed a quantity of blood well down into the dirt; it was made *after* the crime was committed.

ED. A woman, eh?

DUNCAN. Other tracks made by the same foot, not in blood, but in the dust, have given me a very good idea of this woman's personality. The tracks leading toward the car were made by a woman who was running.

ED. How do you know!

DUNCAN. Only the print of the front part of the foot shows, and the print is deep, showing the pressure used by a runner, the dirt is pushed back in a little pocket, the marks of one running are unmistakable.

ED. Honest and truly?

DUNCAN. This woman, running toward the car, probably after the shot, carried nothing heavier than this shotgun; a moment later, she turned and came toward this house with a heavy burden in her arms.

JACK. I doubt it.

DUNCAN. The tracks showed that she was walking with her feet well apart, not one in front of another—a person carrying a heavy burden walks with their feet well apart to keep their balance. Now I am on the right scent. *Cherchez La Femme.*

ED. Do what?

DUNCAN. Find the woman.

ED. Oh!

JACK. Why should a woman do such a thing? I tell you it was the tramp.

DUNCAN. And I tell you that as yet I do not know the motive for your constant reiteration of "The tramp, the tramp." But I do know this: this tramp of yours has no existence. There is no such person.

(EZRA enters at back, pushing the tramp ahead of him. MORGAN has the milk bottle, EMILY's furs and dresses in his arms.)

EZRA. I got him. I got him.

EMILY. My things.

ED. *(Looks at MORGAN)* That's where my milk went.

EZRA. But what does a murderer want of *milk*?

DUNCAN. *(Takes bottle away from MORGAN. Gravely)* It's a complex.

EZRA. Complex?

EMILY. A what?

DUNCAN. A suppressed desire. No doubt when he was an infant he was deprived of his milk. I'm afraid this case is going to be very simple. *(Passes milk to ED.)*

JACK. *(To EZRA)* Has he confessed to the murder?

EZRA. No, he ain't. He ain't said a word since I caught him tryin' to crawl aboard a freight car in the yards. No, sir! He won't say a word.

ED. Won't talk, eh?

DUNCAN. (*Who has been looking at MORGAN closely*) He can't talk. He has never spoken in his life. The *poor* fellow is dumb.

HELEN. (*Affected*) Dumb! Oh!

DUNCAN. See the lack of development in the muscles here—(*He puts his hand on MORGAN's jaw*)—and the general relaxation of the thorax? Quite dumb.

EZRA. Then we can't find out nothing?

DUNCAN. Oh, yes, by psycho-analysis. Sit there. (*He speaks sharply and indicates trunk—MORGAN sits on trunk. They all gather about. DUNCAN sees the stem of a corn-cob pipe sticking out of MORGAN's pocket. He takes it out and looks at it.*) Ah! This man is a muscular fellow, left handed, with a good set of teeth, careless in his habits, and at present rather short of money.

EZRA. Oh, then you know him?

DUNCAN. (*Smiles with pity*) I have never seen him before, but the deduction is really childishly simple. (*He sniffs at the pipe.*) This tobacco is of the cheapest grade. You recognize it, don't you, Ed? Only a serious lack of money forces a confirmed smoker to such a brand. The mouthpiece is deeply marked, good teeth and a strong grip. See where the bowl has been repeatedly burned at the top, on the left side, by the flame of the match, in lighting it, of course. Hence we deduct that the match was held so—(*Illustrates. Gives pipe to ED, who places it on table*)—in the left hand.

JACK. (*To EZRA*) Do you get that, my dear Watson?

EZRA. My name's Nestle.

DUNCAN. We will question him. (*He turns to MORGAN. Yells*) Shake your head for "no" and nod it for "yes."

HELEN. Don't strain your throat, Desmond.

DUNCAN. You have been in this room before? (MORGAN *sulks.*) You have been in this room before? (MORGAN *does not answer.*)

ED. Probably deaf and dumb; they mostly are.

EZRA. I guess I'd better lock him up. (MORGAN *shakes his head violently.*)

DUNCAN. No! You—have been in this room before? You have been—(MORGAN *shakes his head*)—in this house before? (MORGAN *shakes his head.*) You know of the crime that has been committed here? (MORGAN *shakes his head.*)

EZRA. (*Crosses to L. of MORGAN*) You wouldn't trouble him none to keep that up, all right.

DUNCAN. I'm afraid I shall have to remove his complex. Yes, I shall remove his complex.

EZRA. Hadn't the ladies better leave the room?

DUNCAN. It is not necessary. I shall lead him back inch by inch, gently and kindly, over his past life to the time when he was a child in his nurse's arms. (*He turns to MORGAN.*) Can you remember the room in which you were born? (MORGAN *looks at him coldly.*) Can you? Can you remember who it was first deprived you of your milk? (*He hisses the last word at him fiercely.*)

EZRA. Can you—can—can you? (*He slaps MORGAN on the soles of his feet with his billy.*)

MORGAN. (*Angrily*) What the hell are youse doin'? (EZRA *goes back of trunk again.*)

HELEN. (*Amazed*) Why! He *can* talk.

DUNCAN. Cured by psycho-analysis.

MORGAN. (*Indignantly*) Talk? Let me say dis. You know dat pipe you read me history out of?

ED. Yes.

MORGAN. It wasn't mine. I just found it in dat closet.

JACK. You were there then?

MORGAN. Sure I was there.

EMILY. When we came?

MORGAN. Sure.

JACK. You forced that window—— (*Points.*)
You broke the lock?

MORGAN. I did not. It was broked.

DUNCAN. I will now take charge.

MORGAN. (*Disgusted*) Now I'm dumb again.

EZRA. You'll talk, if you know what's good for
ye. There's been a murder here.

MORGAN. (*Afraid*) Murder!

JACK. You did it.

MORGAN. I did not. I'll come clean. Honest, I
will.

DUNCAN. Your name?

MORGAN. Morgan, Jim Morgan. I'm just a hobo,
beatin' me way to Boston. I seen this house was
shut up and I thought I'd give it the up and down.
I found a window already sprung and I slipped in.
I heard knocks or something queer upstairs and
started to beat it, then these loonies come and I
ducked into that closet.

EMILY. And *you* turned the lights out?

MORGAN. I did not—all I done was swipe an old
pipe that was on the shelf.

JACK. Then who stole my gun?

(*READY Chain and Laugh.*)

MORGAN. I never seen your gun, or nobody else's
gun. 'Twas hot in that closet and I took a chance on
opening the door a crack; that big stiff here—(*Indi-
cates JACK*)—seen me and voted to start some-
thing. He opened the door and some nut put the
lights out. He stood by the gateway there and hol-
lered to the skirt to get by the stairs. I 'most broke
my shins over a trunk in the dark, so I gets in it and
shuts the lid.

EMILY. And you knocked on the inside?

MORGAN. I did, when you locked it. What the—
what do you think, I live in there?

JACK. Then I opened the trunk.

MORGAN. And the blasted lights went out again. You know this ain't my choice o' no summer home.

EMILY. And they fought in the dark and he got away.

MORGAN. I got back in the closet, then they went out, both of them. Then the shot came.

DUNCAN. Where were you when the shot was fired?

MORGAN. Sittin' pretty right here, so help me. All I done was to swipe a few of the lady's things; I can't get more than sixty days for that.

EZRA. You can get the electric chair for murder.

MORGAN. No, I can't, but the one who done it can. (*Rises.*) Do you want me to put you wise?

DUNCAN. It was a woman.

ED. (*Points to DUNCAN*) He said it. Cherish the femme.

(*READY Lights Flicker.*)

MORGAN. No! It wasn't no woman. It was that man there. (*He points to JACK.*)

EMILY. It isn't true.

MORGAN. I'll say it's true. Yes, sir. I heard him say he was going to do it.

DUNCAN. Go on.

MORGAN. I was in that closet there. I opened the door a crack and I seen him talkin' to a young woman. He said, "If you come between me and the girl I've married, I'll kill you."

DUNCAN. Constable. Arrest that man.

(*As EZRA steps forward there is a sound of a falling chain and a dreadful laugh from upstairs. EZRA and MORGAN move R.*)

JACK. What's that? (*All listen. Laugh upstairs.*)

EMILY. Oh, this awful house.

JACK. Who laughed like that? (*Laugh upstairs.*)

DUNCAN. Be calm. You heard no laughter.

EZRA. Maybe he didn't, but *I* did. Sounded like it was upstairs.

DUNCAN. There is no one there.

ED. I heard it, too.

DUNCAN. And yet no one is there; at least no living person.

ED. (*Afraid*) What?

EZRA. Stop that kind of talk, in the name of the law.

(*READY Moan.*)

DUNCAN. Understand me, please, I have no vulgar belief in the supernatural, but as my dear old friend Conan Doyle has so keenly phrased it, "it is folly to doubt the existence of a bond between the finite and the infinite. It is mere ignorance to doubt the existence of the non-existent."

EZRA. (*In horror*) You don't mean to say you believe in ghosts?

DUNCAN. Ghosts! Of *course* not. At least not in the ordinary sense, yet I have no doubt that all about us there are uneasy spirits from another world. (*Lights flicker.*)

ED. Oh! (*Sits on couch. EZRA sits R. of ED.*)

MORGAN. Gee! (*Sits in rocker R.*)

ED. (*There are three loud knocks by GROGAN on the door—all startled*) Spirits!

EZRA. Don't let them in. (*The three knocks are repeated.*)

HELEN. (*Startled*) Who's that?

DUNCAN. I will now take charge. (*As he crosses to door a weird moan is heard. He stops and turns to EZRA.*) Officer, do your duty! (*As EZRA gets to door the knocks are repeated.*) Open the door.

DAN. (*EZRA crosses reluctantly and opens the door. DAN GROGAN, a large, red-faced New York cop, in plain clothes, stands in the doorway*) Was there a young woman murdered here?

EZRA. Yes.

DAN. Good. (*He enters. EZRA comes down above table L.*) My name's Grogan—I'm from New York.

EZRA. The detective.

DUNCAN. (*Sadly*) Now it's hopeless.

DAN. I'm going to do the best I can to clear up this case for you gentlemen.

JACK. We depend absolutely upon you. You are, of course, an expert, a man of experience.

DAN. Yes, sir. I was in charge of the Hall-Mills Case and the Elwell Murder Mystery.

DUNCAN. I think you will find that I have the affair practically solved.

DAN. Are you a detective?

DUNCAN. I am a criminologist.

ED. He's an author, too.

DAN. Well, I don't mind his staying here if he don't make any trouble. Who's in charge?

EZRA. (*Crossing back to between DUNCAN and DAN*) I'm the policeman. I had a badge, but a fellow stole it.

DAN. Where's the body?

EZRA. In the woods. She was shot and crawled away—— (*Points to DUNCAN.*) We'll find her, as soon as it's light. She was shot with that gun. (*On table R.*)

DAN. When did you find it?

EZRA. Just after the shooting. Ed brought it in. (*Points to ED.*)

ED. Yes, sir. (*Rises and crosses to DAN. EZRA crosses at back to DAN'S L.*)

DAN. Good.

ED. Pleased to meet you.

DAN. Thanks. You're under arrest.

EZRA. (*Looking at ED. L. of DAN*) Ain't it funny, I never thought of that?

HELEN. (*Down L.*) You can't arrest him. He wouldn't hurt a fly, would you, Ed?



ED. Not unless he got into my milk.

DAN. Milkman, eh?

ED. Yes, sir.

DAN. Humph! I don't want to be hasty; as a rule milk ain't the sort of a thing that leads to crime. I won't arrest you, but you're under suspicion.

ED. *Somebody* done it. I was beginning to think it must be me.

DAN. You've got to look on all sides of a case like this; but, of course, I've got to arrest somebody. (*Sees MORGAN—crosses to front of sofa. Indicates MORGAN, who backs away in terror.*) Who's that? (*ED crosses to back of table R. end.*)

EZRA. Nobody.

(*WARN.*)

DAN. He looks it. How do you know he didn't do it?

EZRA. (*Crosses to DAN*) I arrested him once, but this gentleman—(*Points to DUNCAN*)—said he didn't have nothin' to do with it.

DAN. (*To DUNCAN*) How'd you figure this out?

DUNCAN. By deduction.

(*READY Effect Chain. ISABEL Screams. Lights. Green Spot. Laugh.*)

ED. He's fine at it, you know. Just looks at a feller and says, "fifty-four years old, blind in the left eye, got a brother that works in a tannery, his mother-in-law's got a new set of false teeth and his wife drinks."

DAN. You've got to hand it to these educated fellers; it won't be long before no guy can be on the force unless he's a college professor.

EZRA. Just as you came I was arrestin' that feller there. (*Points to JACK.*) But that bum there—(*Points to MORGAN*)—says he heard him threaten to kill this young lady.

DAN. So?

DUNCAN. No! The young man is innocent.

DAN. How do you know?

DUNCAN. My every instinct tells me that this was a woman's work.

DAN. Glad to hear it. That means a lot more space in the papers.

DUNCAN. Within an hour I expect to be able to prove some woman's guilt! or I would have, if you had not arrived.

DAN. Oh, don't mind me. I ain't proud.

DUNCAN. You don't mean that you would be willing to avail yourself of my services?

DAN. You're a writer, you say?

DUNCAN. Author of "The Haunted House," "The Beautiful Siren," "The Purple Smear," "Blood and Sword," and many others. It would be a great pleasure to be of any assistance.

DAN. Oh, I guess you can stick around.

DUNCAN. Would you like to have me show you the scene of the crime?

DAN. I suppose so, but we can't do much before morning.

(There is a terrific noise—rattling of iron chains from upstairs—ISABEL screams off stage, upstairs—EMILY and HELEN scream. The lights go out, all but a green spot through the window above fireplace, with this spot being focussed on the door to play on EZRA—much confusion on stage—they all ad lib. Exit in dark. HELEN, EMILY and JACK L.I. ED and DAN up L.C. DUNCAN into closet. MORGAN drops back of table.)

ED. Hell's bells, the house is haunted. *(They all dash off but EZRA.)*

EZRA. Wait for me, Ed. *(Tries to open door.)*

My God, they've locked me in. *Let me out!!! (The weird laugh is heard again, this time coming from the head of the stairs.)* There's that thing again. *(The lights flash up full. EZRA sees the closet door opening.)* Oh—oh—oh! *(Backing to c. and front.)*

DUNCAN. *(Entering from closet.)* I will take charge now.

CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

SCENE: *Same as Act I.*

TIME: *Midnight.*

AT RISE: *Stage dark. JACK sits on couch with EMILY. MORGAN sits on stairs. DUNCAN enters with lantern. EMILY and JACK rise at DUNCAN'S entrance. EZRA enters L. at back with a spotlight. DAN enters R. at back with another spotlight. For a moment the three lights are moving about mysteriously. As they get C. they both point their flashlights at DUNCAN. The trunk has been moved off.)*

(READY Lights Up.)

DUNCAN. Oh!

DAN. It's you! For a moment I thought it was something important.

EZRA. We ain't found nothing. Them roads out there is as dark as the inside of a cow.

(HELEN enters and slams the door—they throw their lights on her—she screams.)

DUNCAN. Look out! My dear, what are you doing here?

(LIGHTS Up.)

HELEN. *(Turning on the lights)* I'm going to make some coffee and some toast. You'll be sick if you don't eat something. *(Comes down L.)*

EMILY. *(To JACK)* Ask him now, dear. You must. *(Sits sofa.)*

JACK. Just a moment, Mr. Grogan.

DAN. Well?

JACK. There is an early train for the city. My wife and I are thinking of taking it.

DAN. Well, thinking don't hurt anybody, but you can't go.

JACK. Am I to understand, then, that *I* am under suspicion?

DAN. If I was alone on this case, you'd be in jail right now, but my friend Mr. Duncan still thinks a woman done it. (*JACK sits on couch.*)

DUNCAN. Mr. Grogan has kindly given me until sunrise to solve this case by scientific methods. I am looking forward to a very busy night.

MORGAN. (*Rises*) Well, if you're sure a woman done it, I might as well be going along. (*Start up.*)

DAN. Sit down. Nobody's going until we get this thing straight. (*MORGAN sits again.*)

HELEN. I was hoping you'd let him help me build a fire in the kitchen.

DAN. Go do it. (*HELEN exits door L.I. MORGAN starts for door.*) But stick around. Mind that. Don't you try any funny business.

MORGAN. You can't throw no scare into me. I'm an innocent man. I ain't done nothin' I'm ashamed of for most twenty-four hours. (*He exits into kitchen L.I.*)

EZRA. (*Looks after MORGAN*) If I was the boss of this case, that's the feller *I'd* lock up.

DUNCAN. That tramp?

EZRA. Sure.

DUNCAN. I couldn't afford to have my name associated with such a low-class murder. (*Turns to DAN. Crosses up to door.*) We are losing time. Oh, do you remember if the direction of the wind has changed since the hour of the crime?

DAN. What difference does that make?

DUNCAN. My dear Mr. Grogan, haven't I told

you that this mystery has to be solved by scientific methods?

DAN. (*Crosses up*) Up to sunrise it is—after that I'll just pinch the likeliest feller I see. (*He and DUNCAN exit at back. EZRA follows, running to catch them.*)

EMILY. Jack, we must be quick. We may not have another moment alone together. You must tell me the truth, and I—I must be honest with you too, my dear.

JACK. I blame myself for all that has happened; it's all my fault.

EMILY. I knew about her, this Isabel Westley, long before you ever told me that you loved me.

JACK. I tried to keep it all from you. It is true that I was engaged to be married to her once. (*EMILY turns away.*) Don't let it hurt you. I was a fool. Just an adolescent idiot, and she—I can't tell you—— How can I—now?

EMILY. (*Sadly*) You should have told me long ago.

JACK. I was trying to forget the whole rotten business.

EMILY. (*Angrily*) I hate her!

JACK. Hush, dear.

EMILY. If you had only told me who she was when she came here tonight, then we could have faced her together.

JACK. I didn't know how brave you were. I was afraid.

EMILY. If they arrest you, Jack, what can they prove against you?

JACK. That we were once engaged. They know that now.

EMILY. Go on.

JACK. That she had made trouble when she heard that you and I were about to be married. The detectives can easily dig that up.

EMILY. And that she followed you here on your wedding day.

JACK. Yes.

EMILY. Was what that tramp said true? That he heard you threaten to kill her?

JACK. I was desperate. I didn't really mean what I said.

EMILY. But you did say it?

JACK. Yes.

EMILY. You will be arrested, Jack.

JACK. It means—that I am going to be convicted—of murder.

(DUNCAN and DAN enter at back.)

DAN. I'll leave you in charge. I won't be long. I got a jitney to take me over to the hotel and I'll come back by a local.

DUNCAN. But surely your wife will understand that you wouldn't remain out so late unless it was a matter of important business.

DAN. You don't know my wife.

DUNCAN. But you could write a note and send it by messenger.

DAN. That used to work pretty good, but it wore itself out. (*He turns to JACK, taking handcuffs from pocket.*) Before I start I'm going to slip these on you, young man.

EMILY. No!

JACK. (*Rises*) Arrest me?

DUNCAN. I strongly disapprove of this, Mr. Grogan.

DAN. We got a lot on this feller and I ain't going to take any chances. Stick your hands out.

EMILY. (*Rises. Sharply*) Wait!

DAN. For what?

EMILY. For the truth.

DAN. You mean you know something about this case you haven't told us?

EMILY. (*Crosses to DAN*) Yes.

DAN. Good.

DUNCAN. *Cherchez la Femme.*

DAN. Not till after we hear what this lady's got to say.

JACK. She knows absolutely nothing about this. I am ready! Take me to prison.

EMILY. Be quiet, Jack. It's no use. I might as well tell them the truth.

DAN. Spill it.

EMILY. (*Cross to between DAN and DUNCAN*) I am Emily Driscoll. Before my marriage, which took place only this morning, I was Emily Evans. For many years before we were married——

DAN. We ain't making out your passport.

EMILY. Shortly after we arrived here, this afternoon, I saw a car stop, out there, and a young woman walked toward our door.

DUNCAN. All the time, do you remember noticing from which direction the wind was blowing?

DAN. Probably from *your* direction. Go on, lady.

EMILY. It was the first time I had been alone with——with my husband.

JACK. Darling!

DAN. (*Sternly*) Don't skid.

EMILY. So I told him to see what she wanted and I left the room. He opened the door and she came in. Oh, forgive me, Jack, but I was listening at the head of the stairs.

DAN. Of course you was. You were legally married.

EMILY. I had never seen Isabel Westley before, although I had seen a photograph of her, but I had hated her! Hated her!

DAN. Jealous, eh?

EMILY. Even after Jack and I were married she wouldn't let him go. She made him promise to meet her, out there by her car. I made up my mind to prevent that meeting at any cost—and I did prevent it.

JACK. Emily! Be careful what you say!

EMILY. He was sad after she went, and worried, and I couldn't stand it. Then suddenly we saw that closet door open—then the lights went out! I heard the sound of fighting men, in the dark, and I found the switch and turned the lights on—and he was gone.

DUNCAN. Just before that shot was fired?

EMILY. Yes.

DAN. Gone where?

EMILY. My first thought was that he had gone to her, and I was right. I ran toward the place where she had promised to be waiting for him, and as I ran I stumbled over a shotgun hidden in the grass, and fell. When I got up, that shotgun was in my hand.

JACK. Don't, Emily.

EMILY. They were together, there by the car. He had just turned to leave her—and as *she* turned, I raised the gun and fired—and she fell.

DAN. You killed her!

EMILY. Yes.

DUNCAN. Exactly as I thought. (EMILY crosses to JACK.)

JACK. Emily! What have you done? (He takes her in his arms.)

DAN. (Starts up) I'll phone for a car and a couple of officers from the hotel. (EMILY sits on couch. DUNCAN and DAN start to door.)

JACK. (Crosses R.C.) Is it possible that you don't see what prompted this poor girl to make such an absurd statement? She did it for my sake, to save me, because she knew that I was guilty.

DAN. (To DUNCAN) I'll be back pretty soon.

Just say to the wife hello, God bless yer, good-bye.
(*Lights cigar up c. from match DUNCAN offers.*)

JACK. Isabel Westley had blackmailed me and threatened me. She followed me here and I killed her. (*Circles from one side of them to the other, trying to attract their attention.*)

DUNCAN. (*To DAN*) My best regards to Mrs. Grogan, and tell her that I quite look forward to making her acquaintance.

JACK. I asked her to go away and she wouldn't. I begged her to go and leave me to my happiness, and she laughed at me—and as she laughed I raised my gun and fired.

DAN. (*To DUNCAN*) She'll be tickled sick to meet you. I'm damned near the only gentleman she knows. (*He exits.*)

JACK. (*L.C.*) Have you heard what I have been saying to you?

DUNCAN. That's all right. (*HELEN enters.*) Ah! My dear Helen, would you be good enough to sit here with this gentleman for a few minutes while I examine Mrs. Driscoll in the next room?

HELEN. (*Sternly*) What for?

DUNCAN. My dearest! This is a matter of great public importance. Surely you are not going to be silly. I merely desire to ask this young lady a few questions in the next room.

HELEN. On one condition, that you leave the door open.

DUNCAN. (*Crosses L.I. To EMILY*) Come, please.

EMILY. Forgive me, Jack; it was the only way. (*She exits to room.*)

JACK. Leave it open.

DUNCAN. Oh, this is official. (*Exits L.I.*)

HELEN. (*Down c. To JACK*) What is it? Has anything happened to her?

JACK. They have arrested her for the murder.
(*Crosses to door L.I.*)

HELEN. The poor child. How terrible.

JACK. (*Sits L.C.*) She thought that I was in danger and she wanted to save me; she told them some silly story about being jealous of this woman, of hating her, saying she had killed her.

HELEN. She said that?

JACK. She didn't really mean it.

HELEN. This young woman who was murdered, your wife didn't really have anything against her, did she?

JACK. She knew how Miss Westley had hurt me. I suppose she hated her for that.

HELEN. Hurt you? Oh, I see. Sort of a vamp.

JACK. Not at all. I knew her over a year ago, and we were good friends, for a time, possibly a little more than that, then to tell you the truth, I happened to find out that she was a divorced woman, and I didn't like it—and we quarreled.

HELEN. I suppose you *thought* all the time she was a widow.

JACK. No, the court had allowed her to resume her maiden name. I knew her as Isabel Westley. I didn't know she had ever been Isabel Carter. (*At the sound of the name Carter, HELEN starts violently and betrays extreme agitation. JACK rises, amazed.*) What is it? Why do you look like that?

HELEN. (*With an effort at control*) I am nervous, that's all. Why shouldn't a person be nervous with a murder at their front door?

JACK. (*Suspiciously*) But why should the mention of——

HELEN. (*Angrily*) I tell you I'm just nervous. I don't like to hear so much talk about dead people and crimes and divorces. I'm not going to listen, not to another word. (*As she turns away to R., DUNCAN enters, crosses C. from door at L.I., with some squares*

of paper which he places about on the floor in several places.)

JACK. My God! He's here again.

HELEN. (*To DUNCAN*) What *are* you doing?

DUNCAN. Hush! She has confessed the murder, but she refuses to tell me where she hid the body. This mystery must be solved by scientific methods.

HELEN. (*Crosses to JACK*) I'm sorry I lost my temper just now, but we're nervous, all of us.

JACK. (*Looking L. DUNCAN on knees up c. working with papers*) Poor little Emily.

HELEN. There—there—I just know it's all coming out right. It's going to be just like my husband's stories—awful muddled in the middle, but you do get to the end of them somehow. (*She turns and sees DUNCAN on his knees, intently examining a spot on the floor.*) I don't like to spoil any of your enjoyment, Desmond, but that's awfully hard on your trousers.

DUNCAN. Just a moment, please. It is important that I should not be interrupted.

(*ED and EZRA enter at c.*)

ED. (*Points. ED is R.C.*) What's all them papers stuck around for?

DUNCAN. (*Still working*) Have you found the body?

EZRA. No. Beats me where that dead woman got to. Me and Ed thought we had her for awhile; we followed some footprints for more'n a mile by lantern light, but we found out a dog made 'em. (*L.C. DUNCAN c.*)

DUNCAN. (*Rises*) She refuses to tell me where she has hidden the body, but before I finish I shall force the information from this young lady.

JACK. (*Indignant*) What do you mean by that? (*HELEN moves to back of chair L.C.*)

DUNCAN. (*Crosses to JACK*) Frankly and honestly, I am suspicious, both of you and your wife. I think, Mr. Driscoll, you are not what you seem to be.

JACK. I wish I could say the same about you, but I can't. You *are* what you seem, the damndest fool I ever saw in all my life. (*Sits L.I.*)

EZRA. (*Crosses to ED. ED motions to EZRA to be quiet and moves to extreme R. EZRA follows him over*) He's intelligent for a criminal.

DUNCAN. At present we have no evidence against him, for, as I have already proved to you, the crime was committed by a woman.

HELEN. (*Crosses to him L. of chair*) Your poor throat, Desmond, dear. Don't you think you've talked enough?

DUNCAN. (*Kindly*) You are a dear, thoughtful wife, but you should have gone to bed—hours ago.

HELEN. I do wish you wouldn't be so silly. (*Exit door L.I.*)

DUNCAN. (*Crosses c.*) Silly! Oh, God! What a fate. What an ironic fate. To be always misunderstood.

JACK. (*Rises. Crosses to him*) You poor nut. Can't you *ever* learn to mind your own business?

DUNCAN. It *is* my business. The obligation of intellectual superiority—"noblesse oblige!" Shall I stand idle when my talents are needed? No. I know my duty. Now we will act. Officer! Officer! *You*, I mean.

EZRA. Oh, just at first I didn't know who you meant.

DUNCAN. Go at once to Judge Holt and ask him for the warrant.

JACK. What warrant?

DUNCAN. (*Sternly*) I am sorry, Mr. Driscoll, but I have thought it best to ask for a warrant for your wife's arrest.

EZRA. For murder.

JACK. On what evidence?

DUNCAN. A full confession from her own lips.

JACK. Given to save me—and absolutely worthless.

DUNCAN. (*Pleasantly*) Quite a perfect case. The motive was jealousy. I can prove both opportunity and intent, beside which we have the evidence of a woman's footprints in the blood of the victim.

EZRA. (*Getting sick*) Oh-h-h-h-h-h!

ED. Gosh! I never see such a sensitive man.

DUNCAN. And in addition we have the tramp's testimony of her threat, and of her having been seen running with the shotgun with which the crime was committed, in her hands. (*HELEN enters with a cup of coffee. Goes at back to DUNCAN. EMILY enters and goes to JACK. MORGAN enters. Taking the cup of coffee. To sofa.*) How trivial! (*EZRA starts up back.*)

JACK. (*To DUNCAN*) Now, you wait a minute. (*As EZRA starts toward the door. EMILY sits L.C.*) It's not difficult for a man with a mind trained in constructive plot building to build up a mass of circumstantial evidence against almost any person, no matter how innocent.

DUNCAN. (*With satisfaction*) I think you will find it difficult to discredit it.

JACK. Yet I must do it. I don't claim to be a scientist, and up to now I have been satisfied to read Gaboriau, Poe, Anna Katherine Green and Conan Doyle without any desire to imitate them, but you're trying to put something over on my wife, Mr. Duncan, and I don't mind telling you that I think you're a rotten author.

DUNCAN. (*Crosses and sits L. of table. Kindly*) Poor fellow. (*He takes swallow of coffee from cup.*) Positions—JACK C. EMILY L. of JACK. HELEN up

stage R.C. ED extreme R. EZRA L. of ED. MORGAN down L.)

JACK. You examined the marks of the buckshot? On and near the automobile?

DUNCAN. Most carefully.

JACK. In one or two places you found that the buckshot penetrated the outside metal of the side of the car.

DUNCAN. I did. In three cases, to be exact.

JACK. And did you notice, as I did, that in those three cases the buckshot had not left a clean hole, but made a dent in the metal, a cup-shaped dent, with the actual hole made by the shot in each case at the bottom of this dent and on the right side?

DUNCAN. Since you speak of it, yes. Proving what? That the shot was fired from the right hand side.

JACK. Proving that the shot came at an angle, not straight. That gun was pointed *down* from an elevation higher than the road, higher than the door of this house here.

DUNCAN. Well?

JACK. To have entered this house the one who fired that shot had to come down the path to where it joins the one I was on. I can swear I saw no one, and when I entered this room my wife was here.

DUNCAN. Morgan saw her outside.

JACK. She may have entered from the left; that shade was drawn, and the bushes hide the path, but the shot came from the right.

MORGAN. She did come from the left out there—I seen her.

DUNCAN. But your gun! How do you explain the gun being in her hands?

JACK. I don't! I can't! He may have lied; the gun may have been thrown from the cliff; she may have picked it up. Anything. Is one suspicious circumstance to convict a person of murder? I might

as well suspect your wife here because she was startled at the mention of Miss Westley's former name.

DUNCAN. What do you mean by Miss Westley's former name? *(He starts to drink coffee.)*

JACK. She was married and divorced. She was once known as Isabel Carter.

EMILY. *(At the mention of the name DUNCAN starts violently and chokes on his coffee. JACK steps toward him in surprise)* Ah! He knew her!

HELEN. *(Quite losing control of herself)* Knew her! I should say he knew her——

DUNCAN. *(Rises. In terror)* Hush!

HELEN. *(Furiously angry)* You can't hush me. You couldn't then, and you can't now. No sooner did he meet her, then he started writing "The Beautiful Siren." I sired her. I told her what I'd do if I ever saw her near my husband again.

JACK. You admit you made threats against her if your husband was with her again?

HELEN. I do.

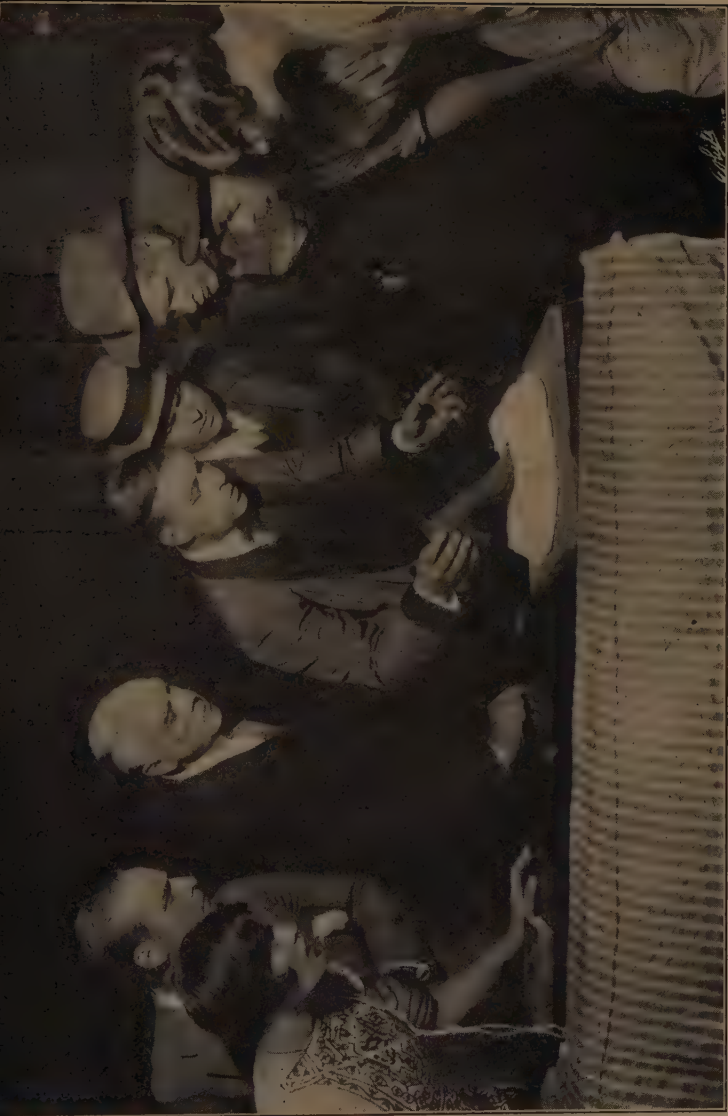
JACK. Well, she was near him today. We know that Mr. Duncan, before the shot was fired, had started toward this house and Mr. Duncan has shown us that instead of coming directly here she went to the automobile where this other woman was.

DUNCAN. I showed you?

EMILY. Yes! You spoke of the footprints of a woman carrying a burden.

DUNCAN. Yes.

JACK. When your wife entered this room she had a heavy dinner tray in her arms. *(All turn and look at HELEN. She crosses at back and goes to above chair L.)* Wait! *(He crosses to table and catches up a prepared sheet of blank paper. These sheets of paper are used for bloody footprint effect. He places a sheet of paper on a certain spot for HELEN to step on.)* Now! *(He turns to HELEN.)* I'll show you who the woman was who was present near that au-



tomobile after the crime was committed. (*Drops one of the sheets of paper on floor c.*) Press your foot firmly down on that paper. (*HELEN hesitates.*) Do as I tell you.

DUNCAN. Perhaps you'd better do it, dearie.

JACK. (*HELEN slowly and reluctantly puts her right foot on the paper. JACK drops the other piece as he steps forward*) Now! (*All look on eagerly.*) Take your foot away!

(*HELEN steps back, the pressure of her foot upon the paper has forced the red ink through it and on the paper is a rough imprint of a shoe.*)

DUNCAN. Blood!

ED. Blood!

EZRA. O-h-h-h-h-h! (*He faints.*)

HELEN. He's fainted. (*Crosses R. She kneels beside EZRA. Takes him in her arms.*) We ought to have some brandy for him—or some whiskey. Oh, this prohibition is a terrible thing. Can't someone find him a stimulant?

DUNCAN. }

MORGAN. }

JACK. }

ED. }

Yes!!! (*MORGAN crosses c.*)

(*All four of them put their hands to their hip pockets and draw out a flask and offer it. HELEN takes flask from ED and gives EZRA a drink. He drinks.*)

HELEN. Here!

EZRA. Here I go again.

DUNCAN. (*Steps to c. and up to table R.*) I will take charge now. Ed, pick him up!

ED. Oh, to hell with him. I been pickin' him up all night. (*Sits in rocker.*)

(HELEN and MORGAN cross at back quickly, pick up EZRA, sit him in chair L. of table, then MORGAN crosses to stairs.)

HELEN. (*Crosses to DUNCAN*) Desmond Duncan, are you going to stand by when your own wife is accused of murder? (MORGAN sits on stairs.)

DUNCAN. Wait—wait, my dear. Be calm! We must remember, my dear, that Mrs. Driscoll here has made a full and free confession.

EMILY. Which I now withdraw.

EZRA. (*Seated*) You can't do that. It obstructs the wheels of justice or somepin.

EMILY. I thought Jack did it, but now I know that he is innocent.

EZRA. (*Rises*) How do you?

EMILY. Because as they were questioning you, Mr. Duncan, about Isabel Westley, I saw something in your face that makes me suspicious of you.

DUNCAN. I give you my word that I know absolutely nothing.

EZRA. That's just exactly what I been thinkin' all night.

DUNCAN. And I am ready to admit that your evidence had done much to clear your wife, Mr. Driscoll. You may safely leave it to me to find the real murderer.

HELEN. (*To DUNCAN*) Why don't you try to find out what happened, instead of trying to make it all up?

DUNCAN. I am trying—— Now wait—— (*Suddenly*) Ah! I have it! Driscoll, your point about the gun having been fired from a higher elevation is sound. I feel that we are getting nearer to a correct solution. Our task is to find who at that hour was hidden in the undergrowth on the side of that hill.

EZRA. There was somebody there after the shower at three o'clock. I can swear to that.

DUNCAN. At last we are making progress.
(Crosses to EZRA.)

EZRA. When you sent for me after the murder I took this short cut over this bluff and come down through the bushes, back of the house there—— (He points R.) I stepped on something funny and I stooped and picked it up. It wasn't wet by the rain.

DUNCAN. Good. The owner is the guilty man.

EZRA. I got it here. (Takes a small book out of his pocket.) Something's written in it. (He opens it and reads) "Our hour of ease."

(DUNCAN hastily claps his hand to his breast pocket in frantic search.)

JACK. (To DUNCAN—ED rises—MORGAN rises, comes into scene down L.—EMILY rises) Yours!!!
(All look at DUNCAN—he recoils as if in guilt.)

HELEN. (Anxiously) Desmond, don't tell me you killed this poor girl just so's you'd have something to write about?

DUNCAN. I was there, I remember now, searching for the owner of that car.

JACK. Ah!! (EMILY sits L.C. again.)

DUNCAN. What do you say "ah" like that for?

EZRA. (Shaking his head) Looks awful bad to me.

ED. I don't think Mr. Duncan murdered nobody.

EZRA. Why don't you?

ED. Never mind.

EZRA. (Crosses to ED) If you know anything, it's your duty to tell it. Then me and you will share the reward.

ED. Money?

EZRA. Yes, sir.

ED. There's the man that done it. (He points to MORGAN.)

DUNCAN. Ah!

MORGAN. Why do you say "ah" like that to me?

ED. When the shot was fired, I was in this room. When I heard it I done what any honest man would have done—I run away—and I'm *some* runner—but as I hoofed it up the road, this feller passed me—and he was carryin' somethin' in his arms.

EZRA. What?

ED. The dead body of a woman. (EZRA staggers.) For God's sake, don't faint till we get the reward.

DUNCAN. Is this true?

MORGAN. No, all's I had in my arms was them dresses I pinched out of that trunk.

EZRA. Prove it, if you can.

MORGAN. Sure I can. Look at me. If I'd been carryin' a dead body of a shot woman, wouldn't I be all blood?

EZRA. (*Disgusted at hearing of so much blood*) I'm going to give up this job. (*Sits on couch.*)

(DAN enters.)

DAN. Say, I got a hot clue. That lady ain't guilty. I know who done this murder. (*L. of DUNCAN.*)

DUNCAN. Who?

DAN. The milkman. (*Points to ED.*)

ED. Ah!!! What you folks tryin' to do? Play "button, button, who's got the button"?

DAN. As I came along from the hotel just now, I found a witness who's ready to swear he saw you not half an hour after the shot was fired, in a lonely part of the woods digging a grave.

HELEN. (*Shocked*) Oh, Ed!

EMILY. And he had such an honest face.

ED. I *still* got it.

DUNCAN. This is a very serious matter, White.

ED. Ezra! Ain't you goin' to stick up for me?

EZRA. (*Rises and crosses extreme R.*) No, I ain't.

A murderer is bad enough, but I ain't got no use at all for a grave digger.

ED. But I was only diggin' for worms.

DAN. Worms?

ED. After sunset is the best time to git 'em. Tomorrow I'm goin' fishin'.

DAN. Can you prove that?

ED. Mebbe I could tomorrow night.

DUNCAN. (*To DAN*) I think you will admit, Mr. Grogan, that this is a very peculiar case.

DAN. What's peculiar about it? It's just like every other case we've had in New York this year; we don't know nothin' about none of them.

DUNCAN. But you *could* know. You could know all about *this* one.

DAN. How could I?

DUNCAN. Do you know the true meaning of the word "medium"?

DAN. (*Holds up a cigar*) Sure. Medium strong or medium light.

DUNCAN. A medium is one susceptible to supernatural agencies, and so capable of imparting knowledge derived from beings of another world. I can do this for you.

DAN. Are you a medium?

DUNCAN. I am.

DAN. (*To HELEN*) Is he?

HELEN. He *wasn't*—but maybe he is.

DUNCAN. I am fully qualified to conduct a seance to receive spiritual communications. The conditions are ideal. About us hovers a spirit not long departed, someone, for all we know, someone now present here is guilty. Shall the truth be known?

DAN. Why not?

DUNCAN. It *will* be known if for a few moments I am put in full authority here.

DAN. Anybody who don't do just exactly what he says is practically in the hospital.

DUNCAN. It is necessary, of course, that we include in our experiment all of those present who are in any way under suspicion. (EMILY, JACK and MORGAN start to leave L.I.) Ahem! Mrs. Driscoll of course, and you, Mr. Driscoll—and you—— (To MORGAN. *They stop.*)—your presence here has never been satisfactorily explained.

DAN. Put the milkman in. We ain't playin' no favorites.

DUNCAN. Now we will all be seated.

JACK. (Cross to DUNCAN) For Heaven's sake, what for?

DUNCAN. You'll kindly do as I tell you. Ed, you sit there. (*Rocker R.*)

ED. I'd like to know what this fuss is all about.

EMILY. I never heard of so much nonsense in all my life.

DUNCAN. Do as I tell you—I'm in charge here. (To JACK. *Points chair L. of table.*) Sit there.

MORGAN. Do you mean me too?

(MORGAN goes up, pulls stool down L. of armchair. Then place three chairs across C. HELEN moves back of armchair, sits on stool.)

DUNCAN. Yes, everybody. (To HELEN) You too, dear. Not that you are in any way suspected, but your name has been brought into this affair, and as Mr. Grogan has so aptly said—we play no favorites. (*They all sit.*) Will you kindly remove your hats? (EMILY sits armchair L.C.)

DAN. Hats off.

DUNCAN. I said will you kindly remove your hats?

DAN. You heard him. (DAN has his hat on, not knowing DUNCAN means him.)

DUNCAN. I mean you!

DAN. Oh! (*Takes off his hat.*)

DUNCAN. Now we will begin.

ED. Well, make it snappy. I got to water my milk.

DAN. Now listen, anybody that feels they've got anything to say can swallow it. There, sir, they're all ready.

DUNCAN. One of the soundest beliefs of the true spiritualist is that the dominant mind controls. Are you willing, for the moment, to give me your minds?

JACK. God knows you need one.

ED. (*To EZRA*) Ezra, give him yours. It's no good to you.

(*Positions—EZRA extreme R., ED next to EZRA, then JACK, DUNCAN, DAN, MORGAN, EMILY and HELEN.*)

DUNCAN. Back of every crime, as the psychoanalysts have recently discovered, is a sex impulse. To find the author of this crime all that is necessary is to borrow a page from the French detectives saying—Find the woman.

HELEN. What woman?

DUNCAN. I propose to cross-examine each man here until I learn the name of every woman who has recently made an impression on him. You first, Ed.

ED. You mind your own business.

DAN. Answer him.

ED. No, I won't. I went to New York last year on a vacation and I don't know as I'll ever be the same man again.

DUNCAN. Some woman robbed you of all your illusions.

ED. I lost more'n that—I had sixty dollars. Women! Bah! Don't say women to me. I set up nights just hatin' every one of 'em.

HELEN. (*Coldly*) Ha, ha, ha, ha!

DUNCAN. There *are* men, my dear, who dislike all women.

HELEN. Ha, ha, ha!

DUNCAN. (*Sternly*) Helen!

HELEN. Oh, don't you talk. You and your Isabel Carter. (*At the sound of the name both ED and DAN jump up from their chairs in great excitement.*)

ED and DAN. (*Together*) Isabel!

HELEN. Both of them knew her—both of them.

EZRA. I guess I been missin' somethin'.

DUNCAN. You both knew her—it isn't possible.

HELEN. It wouldn't have been for most women—it was for her.

DAN. Why do you say *was*?

EZRA. She's the one that was murdered. Her real name was Isabel Carter.

DAN. (*Sit*) Isabel! Dead!

ED. (*Sit*) Isabel! Dead! (*They sit sadly.*)

DAN. I'd rather it wouldn't be mentioned in the papers. Mrs. Grogan is a great reader, but I knew poor Isabel! So she was murdered! Poor little Isabel.

ED. (*Sadly*) She was tender-hearted as a heifer.

JACK. (*Sighs*) She wasn't always understood.

DUNCAN. A soul of poetry. A nature all sweetness.

(*READY Lights Out.*)

HELEN. (*Rises*) I'm going home.

EMILY. (*Rises*) So am I.

JACK. Emily!

(*READY Owl Hoot.*)

DUNCAN. No! no! Please! There, there.

EMILY. (*Sit again*) Then why don't you do something?

DUNCAN. We are ready. Please! (*HELEN sits as before.*) Now! Ah! "Siet patribus, sit heus nobis."

DAN. Nix—the wife!



THE HAUNTED HOUSE

DUNCAN. You will kindly take one another's hands. (*All move chairs toward c., so as to reach.*)

DAN. Me too? (*Looking at MORGAN'S dirty hands.*)

DUNCAN. Certainly.

DAN. Oh, all right. (*Takes MORGAN'S hand. All clasp hands and sit in half-circle.*)

DUNCAN. All mediums have their own "control." A friendly spirit in close sympathy. For my control I shall select a slender and beautiful young girl.

HELEN. (*Sternly*) Boy!

DUNCAN. (*Hastily*) Boy! Naturally—beautiful young boy. I shall call him to me. May I ask you, Mr. Grogan, to press the button there—we must of course be in darkness.

DAN. Just a minute. (*He rises and crosses to switch and presses the button. The lights go out. There is a pause, then a crash and a loud bump.*)

DUNCAN. Hush! What was that?

DAN. (*In the dark*) What the hell do you think it was?

(*READY Lights Up.*)

HELEN. He fell down! Ha, ha! (*All laugh.*)

DUNCAN. Hush! His pride is hurt.

DAN. Pride. There—— (*As he finds his seat*)
Go on!

DUNCAN. No levity. Spirits are sensitive. I call upon them. I ask their aid. Come to us—come—come! (*A sound of an owl is heard offstage.*)
They are coming.

(*Warn Curtain. Ready three knocks on ceiling.*
ISABEL'S scream and vision.)

EZRA. Someone is breathing down my neck.

(*EVANS enters through closet. He is dressed in a black domino. He has a small flashlight strapped*

to him which throws a faint green glow on his face.)

DUNCAN. Hush! Is there some spirit here to guide us? (EVANS laughs, puts on green light—the same laugh heard previously upstairs. He is standing behind DUNCAN. The women scream. EVANS flashes the green light on his face.) Turn on the light! (EVANS disappears into closet again.)

DAN. (Rise) Yes, sir.

HELEN. Desmond—what was that? (DAN presses the button. Lights come up full.)

(When lights come up it discloses EZRA hiding on floor at end of couch R. ED on console, head buried under pillows. JACK with chair in air, ready to strike. DUNCAN down stage C., back to audience.)

DUNCAN. Nobody here!

DAN. What will we do?

EZRA. Let's all go home.

DUNCAN. No. Put the lights out, Mr. Grogan. We have been dupes long enough. Someone is hidden here in this house. I shall go on with the seance. I propose to capture this scoundrel.

ED. How do you?

DUNCAN. This man, whoever he is, is naturally afraid of me. In the darkness he will try to escape. Sit down, everybody. *(All sit as before.)* Put out the lights.

DAN. Then what? *(Presses button. The lights go out.)*

DUNCAN. At the first sound of any intruder, you will flash the lights on again and Constable Nestle will make the arrest.

EZRA. I might 'a' known it.

DAN. *(Down c.)* If he don't, I will.

DUNCAN. Silence! I am ready. Now! I call upon the spirit of—— (*Three loud and measured knocks are heard on ceiling.*)

HELEN. Oh!

DUNCAN. Hush! We are waiting for a spirit from the other world.

HELEN. If you must drag a spirit into this, why don't you ask for Isabel Carter's?

ED. No!

DAN. Not her!

DUNCAN. Be reasonable.

JACK. We don't want her.

HELEN. Well, I do. You're afraid of her, all of you, and well you may be, but she's the one who ought to be here. If we've got to have a spirit, I want the spirit of Isabel Carter. (*There is a piercing scream from ISABEL—her face is seen through window upstage. She has a small flashlight that throws a faint green glow on her face.*)

EMILY. Look!

ISABEL. Oh, the bullets! Oh, the bullets! And the blood! (*She disappears. There is a loud crash, the sound of a falling body on the stage. DAN flashes the lights up.*)

DUNCAN. That damned constable has fainted again. (*EZRA is seen on the floor.*)

CURTAIN FALLS

2D CURTAIN—ED and JACK lifting EZRA to sofa. MORGAN back of sofa, fanning him. Others peering over JACK'S shoulders to get a look at EZRA.

ACT III

SCENE: *Same as Acts I and II. Curtains drawn. Furniture back in places. Green spots out. Stage dark.*

TIME: *Sunrise.*

AT RISE: *The stage is dark, save for a green spot through the fireplace and one through above fireplace window. JACK enters with lantern and shotgun. There is a weird moan off stage— heavy footsteps are heard upstairs.*

JACK. Who is it? Who's up there? (*A heavy chain drops with a terrific crash.*) Good God! (*JACK runs up stairs, taking lantern and gun with him. As he gets to top of stairs there is a pistol shot. JACK screams. EVANS laughs from behind the fireplace. Chain is heard rattling at fireplace, sounds of falling bricks, Fuller's Earth thrown in to make dust in the light. EVANS enters through the fireplace. He is dressed in a linen duster and has a soiled bandana handkerchief around his head. He is seen in the green light, a ghostly figure moving about the stage. He takes off the linen duster and bandana and opens drawer of table, strikes a match to look into it. As he does so, JACK, without his lantern, enters on stairs and levels gun at EVANS.*) Throw up your hands. I'm going to get a look at you. (*He snaps the lights on. Lights full up.*) Mr. Evans! ! !

EVANS. Jack, my boy!

JACK. (*Lowers gun to him. Comes L.C.*) What are you doing here?

EVANS. I came here to protect my daughter. What kind of a husband are you to let her be accused of murder on your wedding night?

JACK. How was I to help it? You don't know what we've been through here, sir.

EVANS. Of course I know—that's why I'm here. Put that gun down! You know that firearms make me nervous.

(*READY Moan Upstairs.*)

JACK. Just a minute, sir. I heard a noise upstairs. I couldn't find anybody—but I keep hearing noises——

EVANS. What sort of noises? Knocks—like that? (*He strikes three times on table with a book.*)

JACK. (*Gun still at hip*) Yes. How did you know?

EVANS. I lived in the damned house for a month. Got so I couldn't go to sleep unless there was plenty of that knocking. Will you put that confounded gun down?

JACK. I think I ought to investigate it, sir.

EVANS. No good. I tried it often. That summer I lived here, I'd hear knocks upstairs, and I'd run upstairs. Then I'd hear knocks downstairs, and I'd run downstairs; then I'd hear a horrid laugh—ha, ha, ha! Like that. And sometimes the rattle of an old chain, nasty sound in the night. I never did get used to it.

JACK. But there must have been some explanation for them.

EVANS. Haunted house! That's why I didn't want you and Emily to come her.

JACK. (*Gun still at hip*) But surely you don't actually believe in ghosts?

EVANS. I'm an educated man. Of course I don't believe in ghosts—— (*A moan is heard offstage.*)—as a rule, but there are plenty of them here. *Are*

you going to put that damn gun down and listen to me?

JACK. But how did you know about it? How did you get here?

EVANS. Emily sent me word. Telegraphed. I came at once.

HELEN. (*Enters up L.C. Sees EVANS*) Why, Mr. Evans—I am so glad to see you. (*She crosses to EVANS and shakes hands with him.*) I was beginning to think that you never were coming back to this dear little house again.

EVANS. (*Coldly. JACK sits in chair L.*) That was my intention. (*DUNCAN and DAN enter. DUNCAN is carrying a covered tray with eight glasses of dark liquid. DAN carries a plaster cast of a footprint. They place them on table. To DUNCAN*) What are you doing here?

DUNCAN. (*Politely*) Ah! Mr. Evans! (*He crosses away from DAN to EVANS, who turns away.*)

HELEN. (*To EVANS*) Surely you remember my husband.

EVANS. (*Crosses to her. Sternly*) I do! The only thing that I remember with more vividness than I do your husband is a boil that I once had on the back of my neck.

HELEN. (*Shocked*) Why?

DUNCAN. (*Coldly. c.*) You'll be good enough to explain yourself, Mr. Evans.

EVANS. I don't propose to enter into any discussion with you, sir—— I couldn't trust myself. (*Cross R.*)

DAN. (*Cross down R.*) That will do. This gentleman happens to be assisting me in the investigation of this case. (*Extreme R.*)

EVANS. And he also happens to be in my house. Understand that I am not boasting of it. Things happen here that I can't explain, that I was at one time almost driven mad trying to account for. I am

willing to admit that I can't keep ghosts out of it, but surely I have some privileges.

HELEN. Why should you talk like that to my husband? What did he ever do to you? (L.C.)

EVANS. He lampooned me, that's what he did. He held me up to ridicule. Why, confound him, he wrote a book about me.

DUNCAN. (*To DAN*) The old cry of the public, Mr. Grogan. Every successful writer suffers from it.

EVANS. It wasn't enough that my property was ruined, that I was almost driven mad by what happened to me when I lived here two years ago—I went from here to a sanitarium and on the day I was pronounced cured, I read a novel written by that man and I had to go back to bed again for a month.

DUNCAN. Really, sir, this is too much.

HELEN. (*Sits L.C. Sadly*) I told you at the time he might not like it.

EVANS. Like it—I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to think about it. I just want to get my daughter out of this infernal mess and then deed this house over to the Township for an insane asylum. (*He turns to DAN*) Are you in charge here?

DAN. Yes, sir.

EVANS. There's been a murder here?

DAN. There's been a woman shot, no doubt of that—dead, right enough, I should say by the blood.

EVANS. Who shot her?

DAN. Why——

EVANS. Do you know or don't you?

DAN. (*With dignity*) Everything points to an important arrest in time for the morning papers.

EVANS. Haven't you found out anything?

DAN. (*Sternly*) Not as much as I'm going to. From what I've heard, you're the father of the young woman *here*.

EVANS. I am.

DUNCAN. Ah, this is significant.

EVANS. I am Edward Evans.

DAN. She was married in New York, this noon, and came here with her husband on a honeymoon.

EVANS. Much against my advice.

DUNCAN. What *we* want to know is, how it happened *you* came here after her.

EVANS. That's my business.

DAN. You answer our questions or I'll lock you up on suspicion.

EVANS. Suspicion! You don't mean to say that you are accusing me of knowing anything about this murder?

DUNCAN. He asked you how it was that you happen to be here.

EVANS. Why—I——

JACK. (*Rises*) My wife telegraphed him that she was in trouble and he came down.

DAN. Oh!

EVANS. Yes.

DAN. You were in New York at the time?

EVANS. At my home.

DUNCAN. And she telegraphed you and you came down?

EVANS. Yes.

DAN. How?

EVANS. By train, of course.

DAN. I see.

EVANS. Do you? Well, I hope you're satisfied.

DAN. Partly—only I'd like to know what your game is.

EVANS. Game?

DUNCAN. This murder was about seven-thirty. There isn't a telegraph office within ten miles that's open after six.

DAN. And about that train thing. There's been just one train through from New York since six o'clock. I was on that one—you weren't.

EVANS. How do you know?

DAN. It's my business to know things like that. I know enough to keep my eyes open. I don't have to be a scientific man like my friend here to do that. I don't have to be a zoologist.

DUNCAN. Psychologist.

DAN. Just a cop.

EVANS. Well—as a matter of fact, I came by automobile.

DAN. From New York in less than two hours?

EVANS. I have a good car and a good driver.

DAN. Where are they? We were in the road when you came. You didn't pass me.

EVANS. We punctured a tire a little way back and I came on foot.

DAN. Without so much as getting your shoes dirty.

DUNCAN. I'll take charge now. How did he know that a murder had been committed here if his daughter didn't telegraph and how could he get here in this time from New York if he wasn't on the only train? And not knowing of the murder, why should he come at all? (*Sternly to EVANS*) Will you tell me that, sir?

EVANS. No, I won't. I'm afraid you'd write another novel about it. (*EMILY enters at back.*)

EMILY. Father! Oh, I'm so glad! (*She rushes into his arms.*) How did you ever know that I needed you so badly?

EVANS. Why, my dear, I knew it by your telegram.

EMILY. (*Looks from one to another*) My telegram?

DUNCAN. She sent no telegram. You can read the guilty secret in her face.

EVANS. Of course she sent a telegram. "Come at once. There has been a murder."

DUNCAN. Did you?

EMILY. No, I said, "There has been a murder. Come at once without delay." I put in without delay because that made just ten words.

EVANS. You're a practical girl, your father's own daughter.

DAN. I'll say she is. An old fox and a young cub. She did it, or she knows who did it, one or the other. (*Sounds of angry voices at back.*)

HELEN. (*Rises, runs to door*) What's that? (*Voices grow louder.*)

DAN. (*Goes up R.*) They've got him. (*JACK crosses to EMILY and EMILY moves to R. DUNCAN goes up C. DAN crosses at back to L. As they come down HELEN crosses to back of table.*)

HELEN. (*At door*) They've got somebody.

(*EZRA and MORGAN enter, dragging THOMAS.*)

EZRA. Come on now. No trifling.

JACK. Thomas!

EZRA. We caught this feller tryin' to break into the house. Yes, sir, tryin' to bust in through the kitchen window.

DUNCAN. (*To JACK*) You know this man?

JACK. Mr. Evans' chauffeur.

DAN. (*To EVANS*) Is he?

EVANS. Yes.

DUNCAN. (*To THOMAS*) What did you want in here? (*THOMAS looks at him angrily.*)

DAN. Answer.

EZRA. He's as stubborn as a mule. He won't talk.

MORGAN. (*With a sly look at DUNCAN*) He can't talk. The poor, unfortunate feller is dumb.

(*Positions—EVANS extreme R., then EMILY, JACK, HELEN, DUNCAN, MORGAN, THOMAS, EZRA and DAN.*)

DAN. You'll have to give an account of yourself, young man.

JACK. Don't be a fool, Thomas. What are you doing here?

THOMAS. (*Uneasy*) Why—I——

DAN. Don't stall.

DUNCAN. Why were you trying to get into this house?

THOMAS. I——

DUNCAN. Answer.

THOMAS. I can't answer. You talk too fast for me, and they're too many of you. You can all go to hell!

DAN. You're under arrest.

THOMAS. All right. You didn't think that would throw a scare into me, did you? I'm under arrest—what of it?

JACK. (*Suddenly suspicious*) Thomas! I don't understand this. Yesterday when we arrived here you tried to steal my gun.

DAN. He did?

DUNCAN. And later it disappeared.

DAN. And the murder was done with it.

THOMAS. Murder! Murder! You aren't arresting me for murder?

DAN. What did you think it was for, running on the wrong side of the street?

THOMAS. What do I know about a murder? I tried to take your gun because Mr. Evans told me to do it.

DAN. The old fox.

DUNCAN. (*To EVANS*) Why did you order this man to deprive Mr. Driscoll of his only means of defense?

EVANS. Oh, what's the use? You wouldn't understand.

DAN. Don't kid yourself. We're going to understand.

DUNCAN. (*To THOMAS*) You drove these two young people down here yesterday. Where did you go when you left here?

THOMAS. Back to New York. I got there about ten o'clock.

DAN. Then how do you come to be back here at sunrise?

THOMAS. (*Takes note from pocket*) Because I found this note waiting for me at the Evans house.

DAN. Let's see it. (*Crosses to THOMAS.*)

THOMAS. The butler told me Mr. Evans took a cab for the Grand Central five minutes after we left there yesterday noon.

DAN. I bet he did. He's been down here ever since. (*He opens the note and reads*) "Dear Thomas—As soon as you get this, fill up your gas tank and turn around and run back to Cedar Bluff. Hang around the cottage until you hear from me. Keep out of sight and watch your chance to let me know of your arrival. Edward Evans." The slick old shyster.

DUNCAN. You were here, then, when this murder was committed.

EVANS. I won't speak a single word.

MORGAN. He can't. See how flabby the muscles of this throat is.

JACK. Any suspicion of Mr. Evans is absurd, and I know Thomas here to be an honest man.

DUNCAN. It's only fair to tell you that we are not at all satisfied, but my theory is based upon my conviction that this crime was done by a woman.

DAN. I guess we'd better lock this fellow up just so as to be on the safe side.

DUNCAN. I am forced to remind you, Mr. Morgan, that you gave me until morning to discover this murderer by scientific means. (*He looks at watch.*) Assuming that morning begins at this season of the year at six o'clock, I still have one precious hour.



THE HAUNTED HOUSE

DAN. Well, what are you going to do with it?

DUNCAN. Ha, ha! For the next hour this affair is to be in my hands. The truth must now be known. Ladies, will you be kind enough to remove the shoe from your right foot! (*Crosses to behind table. DAN crosses to R. of DUNCAN.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses L. end of table*) No, I won't.

DUNCAN. Why should the innocent object to proving their innocence? With my scientific method only the guilty need tremble. Kindly remove your shoe.

EMILY. No.

HELEN. Oh, humor him! He's just like a baby. (*EMILY takes off shoe.*) He keeps on fussing till he gets what he wants. (*She hands him her right shoe. All gather in close for shoe bus.*)

DUNCAN. There is no sweeter music to the ear of the progressive, my dear Mr. Grogan, than the spiteful comment of the average mind. (*He holds up the plaster cast.*) Here I have a plaster cast of the bloodstained footprint. I made it while you slept.

HELEN. Where did you get that plaster?

(*DAN gets EMILY's shoe. EMILY sits in rocker to remove it.*)

DUNCAN. (*Turns to HELEN*) From our front hall, my dear. It can be easily replaced. Here we have my wife's shoe! We will—ah! (*As he tries to fit HELEN's shoe to the plaster cast*) I am glad to say that her feet are too large.

DAN. (*Gives DUNCAN EMILY's shoe*) Here you are, Professor.

DUNCAN. Just so. I shall now compare it with this plaster cast; the result will go far toward proving either her guilt or innocence. (*He compares the two.*)

EMILY'S shoe is smaller than the cast. *All look with excitement.*)

EVANS. Too small. She never made that footprint.

DUNCAN. *(Hand shoe back)* Granted, and that only goes to prove that I am on the right track.

EVANS. How does it?

DUNCAN. We live in a small world, Mr. Evans, and each human being whom I prove to be innocent narrows our search for the guilty one who cannot escape me.

ED. *(Outside. All turn to door)* Mr. Duncan! Mr. Duncan! I found something else. *(He enters.)* I was coming through the lane just now and I found this stuck in the mud. *(He holds up a woman's muddy shoe.)*

DUNCAN. Ah! *(He takes it.)* A woman's shoe, of the best make and quality, and from the right foot. It may be possible——

DAN. Try it! *(DUNCAN puts the shoe on the plaster cast and it fits exactly.)* Thunder! Look at it!

HELEN. Exactly the same size.

DUNCAN. Mr. Grogan! We have found the murderer.

DAN. And I want you to know that I give you credit for it.

EZRA. *(Crosses L.)* The only trouble about it is you can't arrest an old shoe.

(MORGAN and THOMAS go up C. HELEN sits L. of table. EMILY sits in rocker.)

DUNCAN. *(Crosses C.)* Pardon me for the seeming rudeness, but you have a limited and over-liberal mind. *Cherchez la Femme.* The French detectives are right, either as principal or accomplice, the woman was there.

DAN. (*To EZRA*) You ought to be ashamed of yourself, insulting a fellow like this.

ED. (*Crosses c.*) I think so too, Ezra. When a town's got a man like Mr. Duncan in it, they ought to send him to Washington.

EZRA. Or even further.

DUNCAN. One precious hour left. Ed, take that man—— (*Points to THOMAS*) —with you. Search the bushes back of the road and bring me the mate to this shoe.

ED. How do you know there is another one?

DUNCAN. My assumption is that lady had two legs.

ED. Right again. (*To THOMAS*) Come on. (*Exit with THOMAS.*)

EZRA. (*Start up*) I'll go too.

DUNCAN. (*Crosses back of table*) Just a moment! First I have something to show you. (*He removes napkin from wine glasses.*)

HELEN. (*Rises. Sharply*) What's that you've got in my best wine glasses?

DUNCAN. (*Kindly*) We've had a hard fight. I thought that a little drink might do you all good.

EVANS. Drink! Before breakfast?

DUNCAN. Not as a rule, no. It's not a thing that I could honestly advise, but I assure *you* this is different. You have never tasted anything like this! My dear—— (*He offers HELEN the tray.*)

HELEN. I'm sure I don't know where you got it.

DUNCAN. A little secret, sweetheart. (*They all take glasses.*)

EZRA. (*Gets his and crosses back L.*) Why not? (*DAN gets his drink and crosses L. of MORGAN.*)

MORGAN. (*Gets his and crosses at back to extreme L.*) Much obliged. (*HELEN gets hers and crosses L.C. and sits.*)

JACK. (*Hands one to EMILY and sits on sofa.*)
EVANS moves up) Thank you. (*DUNCAN takes the*

last glass and puts the tray down and faces them.)

DUNCAN. (*Crosses L. of table*) Thank you. And now—— (*He raises his glass.*) To the greatest thing in all the world. To the truth.

JACK. Good.

EVANS. Here—here. (*All but DUNCAN drink. They choke and cough over the drink. EVANS sees DUNCAN put his untouched glass down.*) You didn't drink it.

DUNCAN. No.

(*Positions: EMILY sitting in rocker, JACK on couch, EVANS above table, DAN extreme L., MORGAN R. of DAN, HELEN R. of MORGAN, DUNCAN standing L. of table.*)

EVANS. Good God! He's poisoned us.

JACK. (*Rises. Alarmed*) What have you done?

DUNCAN. Be calm, my friends. You have not been poisoned.

HELEN. He's up to something. I know by his looks.

MORGAN. (*Sadly*) I didn't think there was a drink in the world I didn't like.

EVANS. (*Back of table*) Will you tell me what you have done to us?

DUNCAN. Be calm, I beg of you. That the drink is quite harmless is proven by the fact that I have given a share of it to my own dear wife.

JACK. What is it?

DUNCAN. Simply a new medical discovery of which you have probably read in the daily papers.

JACK. Do you mean to say you are experimenting on us?

DUNCAN. Why not? It's probably quite harmless.

EVANS. Probably?

DUNCAN. A simple preparation which paralyzes

certain of the nerve centers, the result being that part of the patient's brain is for a time not under control, the result being the *truth*—whoever takes this drug *must* tell the truth while its effects last. Anything but the truth becomes impossible.

HELEN. Well, I must say, I'd think I'd stood enough from you for the last ten years without you doing anything like this.

DUNCAN. (C. *Amazed*) Stood enough from me, my dear?

HELEN. Well, why not? I've had to listen to your awful novels, haven't I?

DUNCAN. Awful novels? But you always said my novels were wonderful.

HELEN. (*Rises*) Well, I lied. Now I'm telling the truth. I can't help it.

DUNCAN. Awful novels! You can't mean that. It isn't possible.

HELEN. Terrible. I wouldn't even use them to line the pantry shelves.

DUNCAN. Not "Blood and Sword."

HELEN. Dreadful.

DUNCAN. "The Beautiful Siren."

HELEN. Bunk! Slush! Piffle!

DUNCAN. Not "Her Love."

HELEN. Rotten.

DUNCAN. Good God! You don't mean my poetry too. Not my poetry?

HELEN. I wouldn't keep a cat that couldn't write poetry better than yours. Oh, how I've suffered. How I've been driven mad when I had to listen to your silly rubbish. How I've been bored, and bored and—bored. (*Cross to L. of table.*)

(*All on R. put glasses on table. Those L. on stool in corner. HELEN goes up L.C., crosses at back to L. Puts glass on table.*)

EZRA. (*To MORGAN*) He must have given her a big drink.

DUNCAN. There is only one explanation. She has lost her mind.

JACK. I don't think she ever had any.

HELEN. (*Turns angrily, goes up. Sits on chest by window*) What?

JACK. (*Confused*) I'm sorry. I couldn't help saying it.

EVANS. (*To JACK*) Oh, shut up! You talk too much. You always did. I never wanted my daughter to marry you. I don't know why I never told you so before.

JACK. (*Rises and goes to R. of sofa*) Because you never told the truth before—you never knew how.

EVANS. What's that?

JACK. Oh, you're a silly sort of an old fluff if you are my wife's father.

EMILY. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

JACK. What in the world are you laughing at?

EMILY. Do you remember that awful row we had last winter when you made me swear on the Bible that Jimmie Roberts didn't squeeze my hand?

JACK. (*Coldly*) Yes, I remember.

EMILY. Well, he didn't—he *kissed* me. Ha, ha, ha!

DAN. Say, we're all friends here. I was wondering if there wasn't going to be a little bit of gravy in this case for me? Ain't anybody going to slip me a couple of hundred?

EZRA. (*To DAN*) I don't know, but I might as well tell yer, I been doin' considerable bootleggin' on the side lately.

MORGAN. (*Crosses to DAN, holding out a watch to him*) Here's your Ingersoll.

DUNCAN. Now we shall have the facts. Now we shall know the truth. The effects of the drug will

last just one minute longer, but in that minute the guilty one cannot defend himself. I am going to find the murderer of Isabel Carter. He is here. It was one of you. You are about to betray yourself. The truth must come out. The moment is at hand. Do you picture what is waiting for one of you? Prison, then the electric chair. Isabel Carter, or Isabel Westley, as she called herself, was killed by a shot fired from a distance. Fired from an elevation higher than this room. Killed by a shotgun loaded with buckshot. With *this* gun. (*He turns suddenly and catches up the shotgun on table. He holds it out.*)

EVANS. (*Shrinks back in terror*) No! No! Not that! Don't say that.

DUNCAN. (*Firmly*) With *this* gun!

EVANS. I didn't know. I didn't know.

DUNCAN. You did it! (*All rise.*)

EVANS. (*Crosses L. of table*) Yes. I did it.

EMILY. Father! Oh, my father! (*As EMILY runs to EVANS.*)

DAN. (*Crosses to L. of DUNCAN. To EVANS*) Come clean now—spill it.

JACK. Be careful, Mr. Evans.

DAN. Come clean.

EMILY. Don't speak, Father. Don't let them bully you.

EVANS. I reserve the right to refuse to answer such questions as in my judgment might incriminate or degrade me.

DAN. Now we've got to have one of them damned examinations. I never was good at that sort of thing. (*MORGAN goes up L. to c. Ready for watch bus.*)

HELEN. (*To L. of DUNCAN*) Let Desmond do it, and by the time he's finished I'll have breakfast ready. Nobody could do it so well as he could.

DUNCAN. Oh, really! Better than I write novels or poetry, I suppose?

HELEN. Oh, dear! Can't you take a joke! (*She exits.*)

DUNCAN. Joke?

DAN. Sure, kiddin' you along, that's what we were doin'. I remember pulling something about lookin' for a little bit of gravy. Me! Honest Dan Grogan—ha, ha, ha!

EZRA. What I said about that bootleggin' don't go.

(*MORGAN lifts GROGAN's watch from his pocket. Goes up immediately. Crosses DAN on L.*)

DUNCAN. Ah, I see. Then in that case we need say no more about it. Now, Mr. Grogan, I am at your service.

DAN. Just ask the old gentleman questions enough so I can get the goods on him.

DUNCAN. Very well—Mr. Evans shall be properly examined. (*He steps to table.*) Here are paper and pencils; you—(*To EZRA*)—will be good enough to act as clerk. Sit there. (*EZRA sits in chair above table. DAN crosses at back to R. of EZRA.*) Prisoner there. (*Indicates chair C. Places it.*) The ladies there. (*Rocker R. JACK sits L. arm of rocker.*) All must be seated. (*In a moment the scene takes on the air of a courtroom. DUNCAN stands back of table, facing audience. EZRA, with paper and pencil, sits at table. DAN stands to R. of EZRA. JACK sits L. of EVANS—EMILY L. of JACK—MORGAN L. of EMILY—DUNCAN raps for order.*)

MORGAN. (*Rising*) Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Oh, yes!

DAN. Shut up! Take off your hat. (*MORGAN sits L.C.*)

EZRA. What will I write?

DUNCAN. Everything, beginning with the date.

EZRA. What's the date?

DUNCAN. Why—er—what is the date, Mr. Grogan? You've just come from New York.

DAN. The date is—let me see——

JACK. It's September——

EMILY. I think it's——

MORGAN. It's Tuesday.

DUNCAN. What's the date, Mr. Evans?

EVANS. I refuse to answer.

EZRA. No date.

DUNCAN. Head it—examination of Mr. Edward Evans.

EZRA. Not so fast. Do you spell examination—*ax* or *ex*?

DUNCAN. *Ex*.

EZRA. (*Writes*) Edward—— (*He looks at EVANS.*) *Ns* or double *ns*?

EVANS. I'm damned if I'll spell myself into prison.

DUNCAN. *Ns*.

EZRA. (*Writes*) Go on.

DUNCAN. Of Mr. Edward Evans—— You have that?

EZRA. (*Writes*) You—have—that——

DUNCAN. Cross that out.

EZRA. Oh! (*He does so.*)

DUNCAN. By psycho-analysis.

EZRA. I can't even say it. S-i—si—ko—ko—— Here, you write it. (*He puts paper before DUNCAN, who writes and pushes it back.*)

DUNCAN. Now, Mr. Evans. You took a cab just after the wedding yesterday?

EVANS. I did. (*EZRA writes furiously.*)

DUNCAN. You were driven to the Grand Central Station?

EVANS. I was.

DUNCAN. (*Sternly*) Where you took a train?

EVANS. What would I take there, a bath?

DUNCAN. You took a train for Cedar Bluff?

EVANS. I did.

DUNCAN. You arrived at this house some time before your son-in-law and daughter?

EVANS. I did.

DUNCAN. You broke the catch of that window and entered the house?

EVANS. I did. Emily had the key. I didn't want her to come here; she insisted. I was afraid of the place; I said it had a curse on it, and it has.

DAN. (*To EZRA*) Got all that?

EZRA. (*Writing furiously*) Here and there.

EVANS. I'd spent a month here I wasn't likely to forget. I wanted to be here to protect my daughter.

DUNCAN. From what?

EVANS. From danger.

DUNCAN. Danger? A few noises? A groan or two? The rattle of an iron chain, a laugh, and once a cold hand on your head when you were sleeping?

EVANS. I never told that. (*He rises.*) How do you know? A cold hand—a hand with no arm attached, on my forehead. Ah, it was *you*!

DUNCAN. Yes. It was when I was writing "The Haunted House."

EVANS. You entered my house and groaned and laughed, and rattled chains and put filthy gloves in my bed? You did this just to annoy me?

DUNCAN. Is it any worse for the author to study the silly fears of a stupid mind than it is for the vivisector to note the agony of a helpless, tortured animal? Is the literary artist of less importance than the surgeon? Suppose I have caused a slight disturbance in your puny lives? I did it for the benefit of the world. For the good of all posterity.

EVANS. (*To DUNCAN*) And you did this? Oh, what's the use? Even God is helpless before a fool! (*He sits.*)

DUNCAN. (*To EZRA*) You needn't write that.

EZRA. It ain't necessary.

EVANS. I was hiding upstairs when that man (Morgan) entered the house.

MORGAN. That's right; he most scared me stiff.

EVANS. (*Points to MORGAN*) He hid in that closet, and when you—(*He turns to JACK*)—Jack—started to open that door, I turned the lights out and ran down and took your gun.

JACK. And it was you who turned out the lights when he was hiding in that trunk.

EVANS. Yes. I heard you struggle in the dark. I loaded the gun and ran to the window—a dark form ran from the house. Thinking he had killed you, I fired. Then in my excitement I dropped the gun and looking from my window I saw my daughter pass——

EMILY. The gun fell at my feet as I ran past the window. I picked it up and saw that it was Jack's and I hid it behind a bush.

EVANS. I heard the screams, and later, with my ear to the hole, I heard the talk of murder, but only when I heard from you that she had been killed by the buckshot from this gun did I know that I had done it.

DAN. (*To EZRA*) Got all that?

EZRA. Oh, ho, I give it up long ago. For the last five minutes I just been drawing pictures.

EVANS. I was right. For me this house is haunted. (*Rises—crosses to DAN*) Take me—I'm the guilty man. (*DUNCAN puts chair to L. of table.*)

HELEN. (*Outside*) Desmond!

(*WARN.*)

DUNCAN. What is it?

HELEN. Open the door.

DUNCAN. I'm busy.

HELEN. I tell you to open the door.

DUNCAN. My wife will now take charge. (*Opens door.*)

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

(HELEN and ISABEL enter.)

HELEN. Here's your murdered woman.

DUNCAN

DAN.

JACK.

EVANS.

Isabel!!! (All rise. MORGAN
moves L.)

DUNCAN. Not dead!!!

HELEN. No such luck. I found her asleep under a tree. She could have stayed there for all of me, only I'm in a hurry to get you all to breakfast.

EVANS. Alive!!

ISABEL. But it's not your fault. I saw you fire at that tramp—the shots struck all about me. (EZRA crosses to L. front of sofa.)

EVANS. Then I'm innocent.

DUNCAN. But somebody was killed—great God! Look at her feet!

EZRA. (As all look) Where's her shoe?

DUNCAN. (Picks up the muddy shoe from the table) It is here.

ISABEL. Where did you get my shoe?

DUNCAN. Her shoe! Her footprints in the blood! Isabel, I arrest you for murder.

ISABEL. Murder!

DUNCAN. Of that poor woman.

ISABEL. What woman?

DUNCAN. That doesn't matter. It's against the law to kill any woman.

MORGAN. I always said it wasn't no woman. It was a man.

EZRA. How do you know?

MORGAN. Because no woman could bleed that much.

EZRA. O-h-h-h-h-h-h! (He faints and falls c. No one, however, pays the least attention to him.)

ED. (Yelling from off stage) Help! Help! (ED enters, running to DUNCAN—the women scream.

HELEN and ISABEL *move L.C. when they scream.*) I found her!

DUNCAN. At last.

ED. She crawled into the bushes and died there.

DUNCAN. Who is she—what's her name?

ED. Nellie!

DUNCAN. Not your wife?

ED. No—the best cow I ever had.

CURTAIN

LIGHT PLOT

Foots: Amber and blue.

1st border: Straw, amber and blue.

Strip amber off door L., Act II.

Strip blue on stairway, Act III.

Amber and blue spots through windows over fireplace.

Amber lens lamps over windows in back. (For sun effect at rise 1st act).

500 Watt lamps on border—exterior—straw amber and blue.

Green spot through down stage window over fireplace. (This spot is focused to hit door c. at end of Act I).

Green spot through fireplace. (This spot is used at beginning of Act III when Evans enters).

1000 Watt lamps back of exterior backing. (Amber, red and blue gelatine used in these).

Note: All lights must be controlled by main switch, with the exception of green spot through window over fireplace.

During black out scenes in Act I, the stage is in pitch blackness except at end of act when green spot through window is used.

During seance scene in Act II, stage is pitch black.

Isabel and Evans use small hand spots (green) when they appear during seance scene.

The straw, amber and blue borders are controlled so as to go from daylight to darkness (Act I) and back (Act III).

Auto effect used in Act I.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

1 switchboard—15 outlets.

5-500 Watt dimmers.

4-2200 Watt dimmers.

8-3000 Watt dimmers.

5 6-way plug boxes—cable.

1 2-way plug box—cable.

4 sections hercules borders—cable, color mediums—crates, complete.

6 1000 lens lamps. Hanging lamps—cable, boxes, complete.

2 1000 Watt olivettes on stands—6 wood color frames.

1 1000 Watt lens lamp on stand.

1 250 Watt fireplace spot lamp on stand—cable.

3 250 Watt spot hoods on 12 ft. stands, cable.

1 motor water ripple effect.

1 automobile klaxon horn.

1 automobile effect.

2 four light strip lights.

1 six light strip lights.

3 flashlights.

2 flashlight breast lamps for effect.

1 piano stand lamp.

1 carton extra lamps.

1 caster work box.

1 chandelier—shades—cable.

Boxes for all equipment.

1 can assorted gelatines.

SCENE PLOT

Interior, hunting lodge.

Door L. Ext. door L.C. Closet door L. of Ext. door.

Stairs L. Fireplace R. Windows R.C.

Large table R.C. Couch in front of table. High back chair.

Behind table: small chair L. of table. Rocker down R.

Armchair L. Small chair extreme L., stool at foot of stairs. Large chest in front of windows. High back chair R. of chest. Small chair L. of chest. Standing decorations. Bear's head over door L. Elk head over Ext. door. Moose head over fireplace. Others: Duck, fish, Ext. on walls. Draw curtains on windows. Couch and armchair covered with chintz. Other chairs and lamp covered with muslin at rise of Act I.

A bridge running entirely across and over the set on which are heard footsteps and sounds of falling chains.

PROP LIST

1 lady's suitcase.

1 hamper.

1 box groceries.

2 letters.

1 trunk with two trays.

Keys for trunk.

Ribbons for trunk.

Furs for trunk.

Lady's sport clothes for trunk.

Other dresses for trunk.

Fuller's earth.

3 revolvers.

Large iron chains.

2 notebooks.

Milk tray with bottles.

Tray with food and napkin.

Card case with cards.

1 lantern.

Handkerchiefs (1 for each show).

2 shotguns (double barrelled).
Loaded shells for shotgun.
Blank shells for shotgun.
Empty shells.
Several buckshot.
1 pocket knife.
Burdock burrs.
Cigarette ends.
1 corncob pipe.
1 billy.
1 pr. handcuffs.
Cigars.
Writing paper.
Manuscript paper.
Pencils.
Cup of coffee.
Prepared paper for blood effect.
2 pocket flasks.
1 1/2 pint whiskey bottle (dark).
1 small cream bottle with cork.
Plaster cast of footprint.
1 muddy shoe (lady's).
Tray with 8 wine glasses.
Ingersol watch with fob.
Chimes for clock effect.
3 flashlights.
Auto cushion.
Dust rag.
Axe.
Bricks (3 or 4).

LAKE AND MOUNTAIN DROP

SHRUBBERY

PARALLEL PLAT

WINDOW

WINDOW

WINDOW

CHEST

HIGH
BACKED
CHAIR

CHAIR

CLOSET BKG

LAMP

CHAIR

FIRE PLACE BKG.
FIRE PLACE

HIGH BACKED CHAIR

CHAIR

ROCKER

TABLE

COUCH

TRUNK (ACTZ)

ARM CHAIR

STOOL

INT. BKG

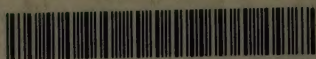
STAIRS

DOOR

DOOR

SMALL
CHAIR

SCENE DESIGN
"THE HAUNTED HOUSE"



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